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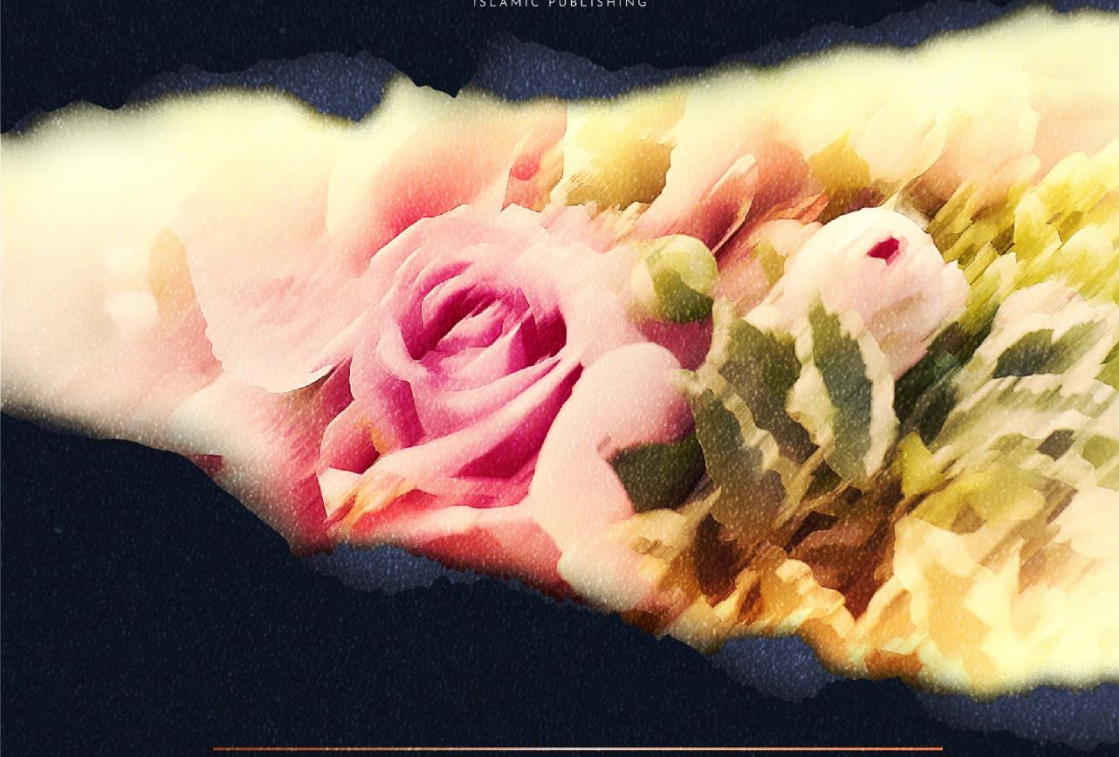

WOMEN
WHO AMAZED US

A COLLECTION OF SHORT STORIES

THIRD EDITION 2022

M ABUBAKR

FOREWORD BY
MUFTI HANIF PATEL DB
(SENIOR LECTURER: JAMI'AH AL-ILM WAL-HUDA &
FOUNDER OF ASKOURIMAM.COM)

Women Who Amazed Us

A collection of short stories

Third Edition 2022

Foreword by

Mufti Hanif Patel DB

(Senior lecturer: Jami'ah al-Ilm wal-Huda

& founder of askourimam.com)

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بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

نحمده ونصلى على رسوله الكريم. امّا بعد!

انما الاعمال بالنيات وانما لكل امرىء ما نوى

"Verily, the reward of deed depends on the intention, and every person will get the reward according to what he has intended"

[BUKHĀRĪ]

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FOREWORD

(Mufti Hanif Patel: senior lecturer: Jami'ah al-Ilm wal-Huda & founder of askourimam.com)

In The Name of Allah, The All Merciful, The Most Merciful.

All praise belongs to Allah Alone and peace and salutations be upon the Perfect Example, our Prophet Muhammad ﷺ.

I was blessed to read the book, "Women who amazed us", compiled by Maulana Abubakr (May Allah preserve him).

Indeed, especially in times of confusion and difficulties, we find true inspiration, incentive, and motivation to better ourselves in the anecdotes and stories of great luminaries of the past, the beacons of true guidance. The compiler has included stories and examples of pious, generous, and courageous women throughout different centuries: the selection of these anecdotes truly brings forth a deep love and appreciation of this caravan and chain of pious women to grace the earth. The compiler does not only provide examples from the wives of the Prophet ﷺ, the female-companions and women before Islam, but of different generations including up to recent times, namely, the mothers of Maulana Ilyas Kandhlawi and Maulana Umar Palanpuri (May Allah have mercy upon them).

These stories entail a variety of morals and practical lessons, helpful in responding to the different challenges of life. They help to develop patience, resilience, optimism and "strengthen your heart upon the truth". [Hud: 120]

The Qur'an and prophetic traditions, too, present numerous accounts of pious women, such as Maryam, the wife of 'Imran, the wife of Pharaoh and many more, as reminders, lessons, and inspiration to guide humanity. The Qur'an states, "Indeed, in their stories [of the past] is a lesson for people of understanding." [Yusuf: 111]

I hope this book serves to uplift and rekindle the spiritual flame of the next generation of girls and women to walk upon the footsteps of our pious predecessors.

I recommend this book for both young and old, as part of individual as well as collective reading within madrasah classes and homes. The book is clear, succinct, and easy to understand. The compiler has put in a great deal of effort in compiling this book, gathering stories from dozens of Arabic, Urdu, and English sources. May Allah accept his efforts, reward him abundantly and makes it a means of guidance for all our mothers, sisters, and daughters. Ameen

PREFACE

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

نحمده ونصلى على رسوله الكريم

Sometimes in life, we encounter extraordinary, interesting and thought-provoking events. Some make us laugh, some make us cry and some make us wonder, while some come and give our life an entirely new dimension. These experiences or events recorded are what make up a 'story'.

It is undeniably true that stories play a significant role in the life of a human. It is through stories that sometimes a thug becomes a saint, and the layman becomes a rich-man. Stories teach us lessons; lessons that motivate us and guide us. They give us a chance to take ideas from the success of others and make us mindful of the causes of the failures of others. Junayd Baghdādī RA says, *"Stories are from the armies of Allāh, through which he strengthens the hearts of his friends".* It is for this reason that the Qurān, which is a means of guidance for all humanity and the source of all knowledge, is full of stories. There is a complete chapter in the Qurān called *"Al-Qasas"* (The story). However, Allāh has a unique style of narrating stories. The stories narrated in the Qurān do not follow the traditional norm of "Once upon a time" and "They lived

happily ever after", or follow a pattern of beginning, middle and end, but rather, the Qurān narrates different parts of one incident in various chapters. One incident is distributed throughout the various chapters of the Qurān. This keeps the reader's mind captivated throughout his recitation, and it provides the reader with an opportunity to fully digest the morals of one part of an incident before proceeding to the next part of the incident.

The Qurān does not narrate stories simply for time-pass or tale-telling, but rather, for the reader to take lessons and take heed to the various repercussions of good and evil.

Allāh states in the Qurān;

"Indeed, in their stories, there is a lesson for men of understanding"
[Sūrah Yūsuf, 111]

Tales, anecdotes and events are full of morals, lessons for every class of people; children and adults, men and women alike. These stories leave a deep impression on the reader's mind and contribute to creating a revolution in people's lives.

What you have in front of you is a collection of stories, specifically dedicated to the great achievements of the women of Islām. We pray that Allāh makes this book a means of inspiration for us all. Ameen!

INTRODUCTION

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

'The believing men and women are friends of one another; they enjoin what is good and forbid what is wrong. They establish Salāh, pay the Zakāt and obey Allāh and his messenger. Allāh will be merciful to them. Verily Allāh is all mighty and wise."

[Al-Tawbah: 71]

Misconceptions, misunderstandings and misinformation are just some of the factors that make up the Islamophobic environment that we find ourselves in, and truth be told, no one is to blame but ourselves. Mesmerized by western civilization, we have lost confidence in our own unique and sublime legacy and civilization; we have surrendered ourselves to the secular and modernist mind with the fear of being labelled as "old-fashioned".

With "*Read*" [96:1] being the first word of revelation from Allāh, it was our responsibility to firstly educate ourselves, and thereafter enlighten the world with the unique and peaceful message of the Holy Quran. But unfortunately, neither intellectually nor practically have we made an effort to present the beautiful teachings of the Quran, and neither have we made an effort to replace the misinformation with authentic and genuine Islamic literature to highlight the beautiful picture of Islam.

We live in a world where feminism and female empowerment is discussed more than before and with an agenda to promote its own culture of obscenity and immodesty; Western media has stereotyped Muslim women's rights. It is unfairly portrayed that in Islam, women are oppressed, marginalized, and secluded; they are deprived of their rights and seen as second class. This understanding of a woman's position in Islamic society is nothing but a misconception, misinformation, or just a blatant attempt to criticize the pure teachings of Islam. Rather, contrary to what is alleged, Islam was the first to grant women rights at a time when no nation or civilization was ready to recognize her as a dignified member of society let alone give her any rights. The Quran was the first scripture to grant her the right to inherit; it was the teachings of the Quran that granted her religious, social, educational, and financial rights. Islam came and not only gave her a chance to speak but gave her a chance to be heard. *After reading the histories of thousands of women in forty bibliographical collections dating from the ninth century, Ruth Rode, lecturer at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, did not find any evidence to support the view that Muslim women were marginal, secluded and restricted by the religion of Islam. In fact, she actually concluded with the following words: "The role of women in traditional Islamic society has often been portrayed in extremely negative terms that are not justified by historic reality."* [1]

[1] www.youngmuslimdigest.com (January 2014)

Pre-Islam, women in Arab and non-Arab lands had no say or involvement in the development of their respective communities and societies. Islam changed this and made women an integral part of the community, giving them a chance to express their opinions in matters of religious, social, political, and economical affairs. This was a time when not one nation or community, but every nation on the map of the world held a ridiculous attitude towards women. *In Christianity, she was considered "the organ of the devil" (St. Bernard), "A fountain of the arm of the devil" (St.Antony), "She is the gate of the devil. The road of inequity, the sting of the scorpion" (St. Jerome). In Hinduism, "Women are devoid of their senses, and incompetent to inherit" (Manu ix, 3), "There can be no friendship with women. Women's hearts are in fact the dens of the wolves" (Rig Veda: 10, 95, 15).*[1]

In France, a woman was considered to be half human and the source of all evil. In China, it was perceived that women possessed a devilish soul and thus invited people towards evil. In Japan, women were considered to have been born impure and they were kept away from worshipping places. In the Arab world, the birth of a daughter would be a shame and a source of disgrace for the family, and she would be buried alive.

When the nations of the international world had this ridiculous attitude towards women, 1400 years before we, the so-called 'Modern-civilized nation' allegedly gave women their

[1] Women's rights in Islam, Muhammad Sharif Chaudhry

rights, Islam had already come and not only granted women rights but raised them beyond what they were thought of and gave them a dignified status. Compared to the West, Islam was way ahead of its time. Economically speaking, up until the 19th century, women had no rights to own property. One of the very first laws to be passed to give women property rights was in 1870; 1000 years after Islam had already given her rights in all spheres of life. The reality is that it was Islam that fought for the rights of women; it was Islam that made the hedonistic men of the time become aware of the great status of women and recognize the political, social, legal, and religious rights that women deserve. It was Islam that released women from the depth of worthlessness to the heights of value and significance. A complete chapter in the Holy Quran has been dedicated to women, namely, 'Al-Nisā' (The women) and on numerous occasions, the Prophet ﷺ has narrated the merits and virtues of Mothers, Daughters, and Wives.

The secular world which seems to be championing the cause of women has done nothing but burdened her under the label of freedom and rights, and the term "freedom" is just a polite term for 'exploitation'. Unfortunately, those who are ignorant of Deen; those who lack spiritual knowledge; those who have been blinded by the materialistic world and have fell victim to their carnal desires feel that the success and progress of women lie in abolishing the concept of Hijab, exposing them to the world and giving them more freedom. Islam by no way prevents a woman from progressing and succeeding in life. Throughout history, women have achieved some of the

greatest achievements, and even today, if one was to study Islamic history, he would realize that women in Islamic society were very much active in religious, political, and literary exploits. Islam encourages women to educate themselves and be ambitious about themselves as long as they are within the limits of Shariah. The likes of Hadhrat ‘Āysha RA are an example for us. Besides being the wife of the Holy Prophet ﷺ, she was an expert in the field of Hadith, Fiqh and even medicine. Many of the distinguished Sahaba RA would consult her regarding religious matters. Approximately, one-fourth of all our religious injunctions have come through her.

If we look closely, we will realize that some of the greatest scholars, thinkers and inventors were the products of a mother’s love and compassion, a daughter’s sacrifice, or the wife’s support. As well as men, women have always intellectually, religiously, and academically been at the forefront. Without a doubt, there is no religion or organization other than Islam that truly understands the nature of women and values their status. The laws of Islam pertaining to women; the veil, marriage, and divorce rights, etc. are all in fact, laws in recognition of the value and status of women. *The law of Hijab is not imprisonment for a woman, but rather a means of security and protection. If one has something which he greatly values, then it is only sensible and logical for him to be concerned about adopting the correct means whereby he will secure and protect it. A person who travels by train (or any public transport) with a lot of money will never go about displaying his money openly. Rather, he will take great pains in looking after it and keeping it*

as safe as possible. Accordingly, in Islam, the most valuable thing is the dignity of women. Hence, neglecting the law of Hijab, removing the women from their homes, and allowing them to intermingle freely in public, is exposing them to great danger. Danger that is similar to those that are feared through exposing one's wealth before people are feared here as well - Ml Ashraf 'Alī Thānwī. The Hijab is not just to protect her from men's desires, but rather it is an honor for her, through which she is valued for what is inside and not the outside.

Islam is all about Rights and limits. On the one hand, Islam grants women their right to study and progress. On the other hand, it has its limits, so that the evil and immoral actions of the devilish men cannot tarnish her honor and dignity.

As mentioned earlier, because of a lack of insight into Islamic history rarely do we hear about the accomplishments of Muslim women. When we peruse through the pages of history, we find a large portion of it overflowing with the heroic feats of men. The front pages and headlines are packed with their religious and academic accomplishments and rarely do we hear of the contribution of women as intellectuals, mystics, preachers, and warriors. This fact cannot be erased from the pages of history that women have played a key role in the making of some of the greatest personalities in history. The remarkable muster of courage, unparalleled steadfastness, dedication, and lofty aspirations have always been concealed behind the veil. When it comes to preserving and propagating the Dīn, whether it be Hadith, Fiqh or Tafseer, or whether it be bravery, piety

and a passion for worship we often hear the names of Ibn ‘Abbās, Imām Bukhārī, Imām Abū Hanīfah, Ibn Kathīr, Hasan Basrī RA etc. but the likes of Hadhrat ‘Ā’ishah RA, Hadhrat Sumayyah RA, Hadhrat Khawla RA, Rābī’ah Basriyyah Ra, and their achievements in the field of religion are somewhat veiled from the world’s eye.

This short book is a small collection of stories that reveal the intelligence, passion, bravery, and accomplishments of Muslim women of the past. May Allāh make it a means of inspiration for the Muslim Ummah. Āmīn!

M Abubakr

Jamād al-Thāni 1442/2020

In the name of Allāh, the Most Merciful,
Most Kind

Hadhrat Umm al-Mu'minīn 'Āysha RA

Her excellence

She can rightly be described as the 'Teacher of teachers'; she was superior in knowledge not only to the other wives of the Prophet ﷺ and other leading women, but even to most of the male companions. The great companions of the Prophet ﷺ, who themselves were mountains of knowledge and piety, would frequently visit Hadhrat 'Āysha Siddīqah RA to learn from her.

Sayyidinā Abū Mūsā Ash'arī RA narrates, *"never was a hadith unclear to us – the companions of the Prophet ﷺ - and we asked Sayyidinā 'Āysha RA except that we found some knowledge concerning it with her..."* [Al-Tirmidhī, Vol 2]

'Urwah b. Zubayr RA says, "*I never saw a scholar superior to 'Āysha in learnings about the Holy Qurān, injunctions, legality and illegality of things, poetry, medicine, history of ancient Arabia, and pedigree"* [Sifatus Safwah, Vol 1]

Her generosity

'Urwah RA narrates, "Once I saw 'Āysha RA distributing seventy thousand Dirhams among the poor, while she herself was wearing a patched shirt." [Sifatus Safwah, Vol 1]

Hadhrat Umm Zarrah RA who used to prepare meals for Hadhrat ‘Āysha RA narrates, “Once, Ibn Al-Zubayr RA sent two bags containing a hundred thousand for Hadhrat ‘Āysha RA. Hadhrat ‘Āysha asked for a bowl and distributed every dirham by evening even though she was fasting on that day. When the evening came she said, “O maid! Bring me my Iftār”. The maid came with bread and oil, so Umm Zarrah said to ‘Āysha RA, “could you not use a dirham from the money to buy some meat with which to break your fast?” she replied, “had you reminded me about it, I would have done so” [Sifatus Safwah, Vol 1]

☆☆☆☆☆

A God-fearing daughter

During the caliphate of ‘Umar RA, it was not unusual for him to be seen patrolling the streets during the night. In fact, this was his routine to make sure that everyone was safe. On one such night, he was patrolling the streets with his servant. Becoming tired, both of them stopped to rest beside a house. They could hear the voice of an old woman from inside the house; she was ordering her daughter to water down the milk they were going to sell the following day. But the daughter refused her request. Instead, she said,

“Indeed, the leader of the believers has sent someone to announce that it is forbidden to mix the milk with water.”

The Mother was not necessarily angry with her daughter, but she insisted that her daughter complies with her request. She even tried to reason with her saying, “Where is ‘Umar now? Verily, he does not see us.” Her believing, trustworthy daughter answered, “If ‘Umar does not see us, indeed, the lord of ‘Umar sees us.” ‘Umar RA was very impressed by what he heard from the young woman. Impressed by her faith and by her trustworthiness, on the following morning, he asked about her and found out that her name was Umm ‘Ammārah bint Sufyān b. ‘Abdullāh al-Thaqafī and that she was unmarried. He then married her to his son ‘Āsim RA. Allāh blessed their marriage, for one of their grandchildren turned out to be a just and pious Caliph, ‘Umar b. ‘Abd al-Azīz RA. [Sīrat ‘Umar B. ‘Abd al-‘Azīz]

☆☆☆☆☆

The University of Al Qarawiyin

During the Eighth century, one of the greatest colleges of the time was the Grand College Mosque complex Al Qarawiyin in Fez, Morocco.

This was one of the first universities in the world. It was well equipped with Astronomical instruments, Astrolabes, Sand clocks, etc. There were also studies in Qurān and Theology, Law, Rhetoric, Literature, Arithmetic, Geography, Medicine, Grammar, Muslim history, etc. It also included learning of the whole Qurān and knowledge of Arabic and other sciences. Students from around the world Syria, Persia, India, etc. would come to study at this university.

Amazingly, this university was originally built as a Mosque during the Idrisid's rule in 841 CE by Fātimah al-Fihrī, a devout and pious young woman. She was well educated and after inheriting a large amount from her father who was a successful businessman, vowed to spend her entire inheritance on building a mosque for her community. On launching the project, she began a daily fast until the campus building was completed. [1001 inventions, Muslim heritage in our world]

☆☆☆☆☆

Umm Salmāh RA's wise decision

Hadhrat Umm Salmah RA - One of the wives of the Holy Prophet ﷺ was endowed with sound opinions and an intelligent mind which were of great use on the day of al-Hudaybiyyah. When the Prophet ﷺ completed the treaty of al-Hudaybiyyah, he said to his companions, "Stand,

slaughter, and then shave your heads." However, nobody stood up, not even after the Prophet ﷺ repeated his command three times. Thereafter, the Prophet ﷺ entered upon Umm Salmah RA and mentioned to her the reaction of the people. He said, "The people have become destroyed." She said, "O Messenger of Allāh, do you really want that? Go out and don't speak a single word to anyone from them until you slaughter your sacrifice, and then call your barber to shave your head." The Prophet ﷺ went out, spoke to no one until he slaughtered his sacrificial animal and shaved his head. When the people saw this, they immediately stood up and also slaughtered their animals. Then they began to shave one another's heads. [Sahīh al-Bukhārī, Kitāb al-Shurūt]

☆☆☆☆☆

A woman's determined faith in the promise of Allāh

A man once arrived in Madīnah to meet the Prophet ﷺ. He narrates that when he came to the Prophet ﷺ, he ﷺ pointed out a house to me and said, 'A woman who lived in that house went out on an expedition (in the path of Allāh) with the army and left behind twelve goats and her needle with which she used to knit. However, she lost one of her

goats and her needle. She then prayed, ‘O my Rabb! You have undertaken to protect those who go out in your path in every way. I, however, have lost one of my goats and my needle. I ask you in your name for my goat and my needle.’ The Prophet ﷺ then described to me the determined manner in which she prayed to Allāh. By the next morning, she had her goat and another just like it as well as her needle with another needle just like it. [Hayāt al-Sahābah, Vol 1; Ahmad]

☆☆☆☆☆

The mother of Mawlānā Ilyās RA

Mawlānā Ilyās Kāndhalwi RA, a revivalist and one of the most influential scholars of India, was brought up in a household known for its piety and vigorous efforts in worship.

Mawlānā Ilyās RA’s mother was a Hāfidhah of the Qurān, i.e. she had learned the Qurān by heart. It was her habit that in the month of Ramadhān, she would recite the whole Qurān and an additional 10 Juz every day (She would complete 40 completions of the Qurān in the month Ramadhān). Despite her other household duties, she was steadfast on this practice of hers along with the household chores.

Besides this, it was her daily practice to recite: Durūd Sharīf 5000 times, Ism-e-Zāt ‘Allāh’ 5000 times, *Bismillah al-Rahmān al-Rahīm* 1000 times, *Yā Mughnī* 1100 times, *Lā illāha illā Allāh* 1200 times, *Yā-Hayyu Ya Qayyūm* 200 times, *Hasbī-Allāh Wa Ni'mal wakīl* 500 times, *Subhān-Allāh* 200 times, *Al-Hamd-lillāh* 200 times, *La ilāha illā-Allāh* 200 times, *Allāhu Akbar* 200 times, Istighfār 500 times, *Ufawwidhu amrī illallāh* 100 times, *Hasbunallāh wa ni'mal wakīl* 1000 times, *Rabbī inni maghlūbun fantasir* 1000 times, *Rabbī-innī masannī al-Dhurru wa anta arhamur al-Rahimīn*, 100 times, *Lā ilāha illā anta Subhānaka innī kuntu min al-Zālimīn* 100 times. [Dīnī Da’wat]

☆☆☆☆☆

A small girl shocks the saint

One day, Shaykh Abū Abdillāh Muhammad Ibn Sulaymān Al-Jāzūlī[1] was on a journey. When he was in a great need of water for performing ablution, he came upon a well but could not reach the water without a bucket and rope which he did not have. He became very worried. A young girl saw this and came to his assistance. She spat into the well whereupon the water rose to the top on its own

[1] A pious saint and scholar and author of ‘Dalā’il al-Khayrāt’

accord. Seeing this miracle, he asked the girl, “how is that possible?” the Girl replied, “I was able to do this through my sending of blessings upon the Prophet ﷺ.” Having thus seen the benefit of sending Durūd upon the Prophet ﷺ, he decided to write Dalā’il al-Khayrāt. [Dalā’il al-Khayrāt - (Guide to Goodness - English Translation)]

☆☆☆☆☆

A positive wife

Asma’ī says, “I arrived at an outlying desert area where I saw the most beautiful of women married to the ugliest of men.

I asked her, “How can a woman like you be happy with a husband like this?”

She replied, “Remain silent! You have spoken out of turn. Perhaps, he is better than me in his relationship with his creator and I am his reward for this. Conversely, I may not be on good terms with my creator and he has made him my punishment. Should I not be content with that which pleases Allāh?” Asma’ī says, “Her reply silenced me.” [Ihyā ‘Ulūm al-Dīn Vol 2]

☆☆☆☆☆

A passion for serving the Deen

During the time of Hārūn Rashīd, the Romans took several Muslim women as captives and news of this reached him. Mansūr Ibn ‘Ammār RA was promptly advised to utilize the court of Hārun Rashīd and encourage the Muslims to fight in the path of Allāh and release the captives. He agreed and while encouraging them, a sealed package was thrown towards him, to which was attached the following note, “I am an Arab woman. I have received news of the capture of the Muslim women by the Romans, and I heard you encouraging people to fight in the path of Allāh. I hereby present to you the most honorable part of my body, my braids. I have cut my long hair and placed it in this sealed package. I ask you in the name of Allāh, the great, to make them into a bridle for a horse that will be used in the path of Allāh. Perhaps Allāh, the great, will take pity on my condition and shower his mercy upon me due to this action of mine.” [Sifatus Safwah Vol 2]

☆☆☆☆☆

A mother replies brilliantly

Thābit B. Qays RA narrates: a woman called Khallād came to the Prophet ﷺ while she was veiled. She was searching for her son who had been martyred. Some of the companions said to her: “you have come here asking for your son while veiling your face?” She said, “if I am afflicted with the loss of my son, I shall not suffer the loss of my modesty” the messenger of Allāh ﷺ said, “You will get the reward of two martyrs for your son.” She asked: why is that so? The Prophet ﷺ replied, “Because the Ahl al-Kitāb (people of the book) have killed him.” [Sunan abī Dāwūd]

☆☆☆☆☆

Hadhrat Safiyyah RA’s bravery

Hadhrat ‘Abbād narrates that during the battle of Khandaq, Hadhrat Safiyyah RA was in a fortress, which belonged to Hadhrat Hassān RA. She narrates, “Hassān was with us women and children in the fortress when a Jew passed by and started circling the fortress. There was no one to defend us as the Prophet ﷺ and the Muslims were engaged with the enemy. When this intruder suddenly came upon

us, I said, “O Hassān! As you can see, this Jew is circling the fortress. By Allāh! I fear that he will inform the Jews behind us about our secrets while the Messenger of Allāh and his companions are occupied elsewhere. Go down and kill him” Hassān replied, ‘May Allāh forgive you, O daughter of ‘Abd al-Muttalib. By Allāh! You know well that I am unable to do that. When he said this to me and I saw that I could expect no support from him, I took a tent peg and came down from the fortress. I then struck the Jew until he was dead. After finishing off with him, I returned to the fortress and said, “O Hassān! Go down and take his possessions. The only thing that prevented me from taking them myself was that he is a man. [Hayāt al-Sahābah; al-Bidāyah wa al-Nihāyah, Bayhaqī]

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A daring Sahābiyya

Anas RA narrates that on the day of Hunayn, Umm Sulaym RA took out a dagger she had in her possession. Abū Talha saw her and said, “Messenger of Allāh, this is Umm Sulaym, she is holding a dagger. The Messenger of Allāh ﷺ asked her, “What is this dagger for O Umm Sulaym?” She bravely replied, “I shall run it through the belly of any Kāfir that approaches me.” The Messenger of Allāh smiled on hearing these words. [Sahīh Muslim, Kitāb al-Jihād]

Umm ‘Ammārah’s participation in battles

Hadhrat Umm ‘Ammārah RA, a Sahābiyyah, participated in the battle of Uhud and fought courageously. At first, she took the responsibility of distributing water to Muslim fighters and nursing the wounded till they were having the upper hand. When the Muslims were routed, and confusion was spread in the camp, she was forced to take up arms. She came close to the Prophet ﷺ and protected him with the utmost bravery. She had picked up a sword and a shield from a fleeing soldier and when the unbelievers attacked the Holy Prophet ﷺ she defended him with arrows and swords. When Ibn Qāmiyah reached the Holy Prophet ﷺ to attack him, she advanced and defended his attack. She received a deep wound in her shoulder. She attacked him with his sword, but he was unhurt due to the double armor he was wearing.

During the khilāfat of Hadhrat Abūbakr RA, she took one of her sons, Habīb, to fight against the false Prophet Musaylamah in the battle of Yamāmah. Musaylamah killed her son, and she vowed to kill Musaylamah or attain martyrdom herself. She drew her sword and went into the battlefield courageously. She had one of her hands chopped off and received twelve wounds. May Allāh have mercy on her. [Biographies of women companions of the Holy Prophet ﷺ, Mawlānā, Sa’īd Ansārī, ‘Abd al-Salām and ‘Allāmah Sayyid Sulaymān Nadwī; Ibn Hishām]

Asmā bint Abūbakr RA

Hadhrat Asmā RA was the beloved daughter of Hadhrat Abūbakr RA. She was one of the first women to have accepted Islām. According to some narrations, she was the eighteenth person to accept Islām. Just like her father, she was courageous and generous.

Patience on son's martyrdom

Hadhrat Asmā RA was the daughter of Hadhrat Abūbakr RA and the mother of the valiant Sahabi, Hadhrat 'Abdullāh b. Zubayr RA.

When the Syrian forces besieged the Holy Ka'bah, 'Abdullāh b. Zubayr came to his mother Hadhrat Asmā RA for advice. She advised him to die fighting the enemy. When his final hour and martyrdom appeared very close, he again came to his mother for advice. She said, "My son! Humiliating and disgraceful peace for fear of death is not better than being killed. This is because to fight with a sword in honour is better than to beat with a whip in dishonour."

He acted on his mother's advice and fell fighting courageously. Hajjāj put his dead body on a cross. Hadhrat Asmā RA with her slave girl visited her son's dead body after three days. She bore indefinite patience and forbearance and simply remarked, "Has not the time arrived for this rider to get down

his mount?" [Biographies of women companions of the Holy Prophet ﷺ, Mawlānā, Sa'īd Ansāri, 'Abd al-Salām and 'Allāmah Sayyid Sulaymān Nadwī; Usud al Ghābah, Istī'āb]

Her spirit of bravery

On his final visit to his mother, Abdullāh B. Zubayr RA embraced Hadhrat Asmā RA. As they were both emotionally wrapped in each other's arms, knowing that this would be their last meeting, Hadhrat Asma noticed that Ibn Zubayr was wearing a body armor. She said to him, "Those who are intent on sacrificing their life do not need armor." Abdullāh B. Zubayr assured her explaining that he had only worn the armor to assure her that he was fully prepared for the assault. When she was still not assured, Abdullāh B. Zubayr removed his armor, pulled up his sleeves and tied his shirt around his waist, while Hadhrat Asmā was saying, "wear your clothes in a manner that displays vigor and prudence" [Tārīkh Tabarī, Vol 5]

Commitment and tolerating torture

When Allāh permitted the Prophet ﷺ to leave Makkah and migrate to Madīnah, he went and informed Hadhrat Abūbakr RA. Hadhrat Abūbakr RA accompanied the Prophet on this journey and his entire family; his wife, slaves, sons, and daughters provided their services for the Prophet ﷺ.

When the Prophet ﷺ slipped through the hands of the Quraish on the day of Hijrah, they came to the house of Abubakr RA. Hadhrat Asma RA opened the door and they asked

her where her father was? Very calmly she replied, “I do not know”. Abū Jahal raised his hands and slapped Hadhrat Asma so hard that her earring went flying. However, she persevered and did not disclose the location of her father and the Prophet ﷺ [Al-Rahīq al-Makhtūm; Ibn Hishām]

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The Mother of Sayyid Abū al-Hasan ‘Alī Nadwī

The scholar and thinker of the century, Mawlānā Sayyid Abū al-Hasan ‘Alī Nadwī was one of the great scholars of our times. Acknowledged by both the Arabs and Non–Arabs as an erudite scholar, his writings in Arabic and Urdu are profound and are read all over the world.

As a student, Mawlānā was an average student and not one of the bright ones. However, the way Allāh used him to serve his Dīn is quite remarkable.

When Mawlānā was asked about this rather uncharacteristic success that he gained by becoming one of the greatest scholars, thinkers, and writers of the century, he would explain that the Du’ās of his beloved mother was the key cause of his success.

Mawlānā's mother was a religious and pious woman who spent most of her time in the remembrance of Allāh. It was her habit that every day till the very last days of her life she would perform two Rak'āts of Salāt al-Hājah[1] and make the following Du'ā for her son; "O Allāh save the light of my eyes, my 'Alī from committing any evil, O Allāh you be his guide in every step of his life."

She had advised her son, "O 'Alī, make it a habit to make this Du'ā every day: 'O Allāh, grant me the best part of the good that you give to your pious servants." [Bikhre Motī, Vol 7]

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Unprecedented dedication

A Professor of Islamic studies at a college had a bright daughter who passed her Metric exams with exceptional marks. Due to her talent and ability, she considered studying further and becoming a nurse. However, at that time there was no Girls' college, and her father was not prepared to see her studying in a mixed college of boys and girls. However, the girl was determined to fulfill her dream and aspirations, so the father permitted her to study privately.

[1] prayer for fulfilment of needs

As the father was a professor in a college, he brought all the medical books for the daughter from the college and she started studying privately and preparing for the medical exams.

When the young girl would encounter a tough and complex topic, she would refer to her father. The father was a lecturer of Islamic studies and he had no knowledge of science or medicine, therefore the next day, he would refer to the professors of science and they would explain the subject to him. He would come back home and from the little he had understood, he would explain to his daughter. Being a bright girl, the daughter would pick up from the hints and solve the problem.

She continued to study like this till the very end. When she gave her examinations, she passed so successfully that she was admitted into the 'Fātimah Jināh medical college' in Lahore which is an exclusive Girls' college and she eventually became a nurse. [Khutbāt e Faqīr, Vol 1]

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Hadhrat Fātimah bint Muhammad ﷺ

Hadhrat Fātimah RA was the Beloved daughter of the Prophet ﷺ. The Prophet ﷺ had a special love for Fātimah. He once said: "Fātimah is a part of me. Whatever pleases her, pleases me, and whatever angers her, angers me."[1] He also said: "Sufficient for you among the women of mankind are: Maryam Bint ‘Imrān, ‘Āsiyah, the wife of Fir’awn, Khadījah, Mother of the Believers and Fātimah, daughter of Muhammad."[2]

Fātimah RA was given the title of "*al-Zahrā*" which means "The Resplendent One". That was because of her beaming face which seemed to radiate light. It is said that when she stood for Prayer, the Mihrāb would reflect the light of her countenance. She was also called "*al-Batūl*" because of her asceticism. Instead of spending her time in the company of women, much of her time would be spent in Salāh, in reading the Qurān and in other acts of worship.

[1] Jāmi` al-Tirmidhī Vol. 2 al-Manāqib

[2] Jāmi` al-Tirmidhī Vol. 2 al-Manāqib

Hadhrat Fātimah RA's final days

On his return from the Farewell Pilgrimage, the Prophet ﷺ became seriously ill. His final days were spent in the apartment of his wife, 'Āysha RA. When Fātimah RA came to visit him, 'Āysha RA would leave father and daughter together. One day before his death, he called Fātimah RA. When she came, he whispered something in her ears upon which she began to weep. Then he called her again and whispered something in her ears which made her smile. 'Āysha RA says, I asked her about this and she said, "The Prophet ﷺ told me that he would very soon meet up with his Lord, and so I cried. Then he said to me, 'do not cry for you will be the first of my household to join me,' and so I smiled." [Sahīh Bukhāri; virtues and merits of companions]

Not long afterwards, the Holy Prophet ﷺ passed away. Fātimah was grief-stricken, and she would often be seen weeping profusely. One of the companions noted that he did not see Fātimah RA laugh after the death of her father.

One morning, early in the month of Ramadhān, just less than five months after the Prophet ﷺ had passed away, Fātimah woke up looking unusually happy and full of delight. In the afternoon of that day, she called Salmah bint Umays who was looking after her. She asked for some water and had a bath. She then put on new clothes and applied perfume on herself. She then asked Salmah to put her bed in the courtyard of the house. With her face looking to the heavens above, she asked for her husband 'Alī RA. He was taken aback when he saw her

lying in the middle of the courtyard and asked her what was wrong. She smiled and said: "I have an appointment today with the Messenger of Allāh." ‘Alī RA cried, and she tried to console him. She told him to look after their sons Hasan and Husayn and advised that she should be buried without ceremony. She gazed upwards again, then closed her eyes and passed away. [Companions of the Prophet, ‘Abd al-Wāhid Hāmid]

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A mother′s Du′ā revives the dead

Hadhrat Anas b. Mālik RA says, “Once we went to visit a youngster who had become ill. He eventually passed away very quickly. We closed his eyes and covered his face with a cloth. One of us said to his mother, ‘Look forward to receiving the rewards from Allāh’ i.e. have patience on the death of your son. She asked, “Has he passed away?” When we confirmed that he had, she raised her hands to the heavens and supplicated, “O Allāh! I have believed in you and migrated to your Rasūl. Whenever I have been afflicted with any calamity, I have supplicated to you and you have always removed my difficulties. O Allāh! I am now begging you not to burden me with this calamity.” The youngster then came back to life.

In another narration, it is stated that the boy was afflicted by the disease that afflicted the people of Madīnah. After an illness of a few days, the boy passed away. The Prophet ﷺ closed the boy's eyes and instructed that the burial arrangements be made. Hadhrat Anas RA narrates that we were just about to bathe him when the Prophet ﷺ instructed me saying, "O Anas! Go and inform his mother." When I informed his mother, she came and sat by the boy's feet and holding his two feet, she supplicated to Allāh saying, "O Allāh! I happily submitted to you and vehemently opposed the idols. I then migrated out of my yearning for you. O Allāh! Do not let the idol worshippers rejoice at my expense and do not burden me with a calamity that I am unable to bear."

Hadhrat Anas RA further says, "By Allāh! She had hardly ended her Du'ā when the boy's feet started to move and he threw the sheet off his face. He then lived on until the Prophet ﷺ passed away and until his mother also passed away." [Hayāt al-Sahābah Vol 3; Bayhaqī, as quoted in al-Bidāyah wa al-Nihāyah]

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Fearless and courageous in times of hostility

During the days of communism in Russia, where thousands of people were leaving the fold of Islām; let alone preaching Islām, it was impossible to fulfill the basic obligations of Islām without being persecuted. In this era of trials and tribulations, a twenty-year-old girl, full of courage and modesty was bestowed with such Imān that she would fearlessly preach to other girls advising them to stay firm on their faith. She would debate with people for hours upon hours and eventually make them read the Kalimah. The locals would ask her to stop her efforts as she was putting herself in danger. They would say to her, “You are a young girl; it is a matter of your honour. You should not preach so openly.” She would reply, “Islām is more valuable than my life and honour. If my life is accepted in the path of Allāh, then what difference does it make.” Saying this, she would fearlessly continue with her preaching. She continued this fearless and courageous preaching in a very hostile environment for seventy years, and as a result, she became the means of thousands of women coming into the fold of Islām and thousands of women repenting from atheism, the fitnah of the time. [Khutbāt Faqīr, Vol 8]

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A love affair based on Taqwā is rewarded

There was a young man in Kūfāh, who was extremely handsome, and he would engage himself in vigorous worship. Because of his continuous engagement in worship, he had become pale. When this young man came to live in a tribe called *Nakh'ah*, his eyes fell upon a girl and he became attracted towards her. The young man sent a proposal to her, but it was rejected by the father. The girl was also incited towards him and as her love increased for him, she sent a message to him saying that either you come to me, or I make a plan to come to you. He replied, "None of the options are possible because the Qurān says: If I were to disobey my lord, then I fear the punishment of the great day."

Hearing this reply, she said to herself, "despite of his deep love for me, he has so much fear of Allāh! By Allāh, no one but he will marry me."

Thereafter, she left all her luxuries and engaged herself in worship. Despite her immense love, she did not commit any act which was against the Sharī'ah, until she eventually died. The young man would go to her grave and weep. One day as he was weeping beside her grave, he saw her in a dream. He asked her, "How are you?" She replied, "O my desired one! How pleasant is your love, a true love which dragged me to-

wards virtues and good deeds." I asked her, "What did you get in return for this love?" She replied, "I was taken to such luxuries which are never going to fade in the everlasting garden with a kingdom that will never perish." He said to her, "Remember me over there because I never forget you." She replied, "By Allāh! I also never forget you. I even requested my master and your master to unite us, so help me by working hard (by exerting yourself in worship)." He asked, "When will I be seeing you?" She replied, "You will be joining us very soon" After this dream, the youth did not live for more than seven days. [When desire takes over; Ahsan al-Qasas]

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Mother of Mawlānā 'Umar Pālanpūrī RA

Hadhrat Mawlānā 'Umar Pālanpūrī RA was a great scholar, saint and orator from India, particularly known for his services in Tablīgh.

His father died while he was still a young child, and his mother took up the responsibility of bringing him up. Although his mother was not acquainted with the sciences of Qurān and Sunnah, her religious passion did not deprive her of the fear of Allāh and the worry and concern for the hereafter. She would regularly visit a lady, Maryam Khāla a scholarly woman who had studied till *Mishkāt sharīf*, and in her company developed

the fear of Allāh, Taqwā and the worry for the Hereafter. She would constantly remind her son, Mawlānā ‘Umar RA in his youth about Judgment Day, the Grave, Jannat and Jahannam etc.

One day, when she heard the Hadīth that the parents of a Hāfidh will be made to wear a crown on the Day of Judgement, she started crying and instructed her son, Mawlānā ‘Umar to start acquiring religious knowledge. Upon his mother’s instruction, when Mawlānā ‘Umar took the path of becoming a Hāfidh and ‘Ālim, his relatives complained to his mother and tried to influence her by taunting her that what is he going to get by becoming a ‘Mullā’ (i.e. an ‘Ālim). His mother promptly replied, “You people are worried about worldly material, the world will come to his feet.” She was unmoved by these remarks and carried on motivating and advising Mawlānā in pursuing the religious sciences.

Through her Du’ās, worry and concern, Allāh took immense work from Mawlānā.

Mawlānā ‘Umar Sāheb RA was once in the path of Allāh while his mother was in the last moments of her life. Her relatives advised her to call her son (Mawlānā ‘Umar RA) over from Deoband as these were her final moments. She replied, “No! No! He has gone out on a religious Endeavour, and I am leaving this world empty-handed; he will be my only means of provisions in the hereafter. If Allāh asks me, what have you brought? Then I can say, I have left my beloved son in your path from whom I separated only for your sake.”

Due to her old age, she had lost some of her senses, however, as death drew near, she said that she could smell something. She then uttered the words, *al-Salām ‘Alaykum*, smiled and then became unconscious. When she regained consciousness, those around her asked her why she smiled and to who was she greeting. She replied, “I saw my son, ‘Umar between two angels, on seeing him, I smiled and greeted him by saying the Salām.” Shortly after this, she passed away and reached the mercy of Allāh. [Bikhre Motī Vol 8]

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Reinforcement of women frightens the enemy

In the battle of Maysān, when the Muslims encountered the inhabitants of Maysān on the banks of the river Tigris, Hadhrat Mughīrah RA who was the commander of the Muslim army at the time, left the participating women far behind from the attacking army. When the fighting became fierce and casualties were falling, the daughter of Hārith, Ardah RA, planned with the other women to help the Muslims. She made a long banner with her apron, and the rest of the women made similar banners of theirs. The two forces were fighting desperately when these women marched towards the Muslim army

with their banners afloat in the air. The enemy thought it to be a fresh reinforcement of the Muslims and thus, discouraged, started to retreat. [Heroic deeds of Muslim woman, Sayyid Sulaymān Nadwī]

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Girls aren't fooled by artificial love

Al-Jāhiz narrates: A young man in our city fell in love with a young girl. One day he wrote her a letter, "May I be sacrificed for you! Please send me a sweet dish and some bread as I have some guests who are reciters of the Qurān." She complied.

The next day, he wrote to her again, "May I be sacrificed for you! Please send me a sweetened drink, as I have some singers as guests."

She wrote back, "May Allāh protect you! Love is in the heart and its effects manifest in the various limbs of your body. Your love, however, appears to be confined to your stomach! You appear to be an uninvited guest whose love is to eat." [Humorous anecdotes; al-Tatfīl]

A brave Queen

Rāzia Sultāna was the daughter of Sultan Altamash. She ruled for a short period during her life and fulfilled the role of a Queen in a way better than any other Queen. Once, when her father Altamash went out on a hunting expedition, hunting lions, the women of his palace followed at a distance. Rāzia Sultāna was also present on this expedition.

As they were travelling, all of a sudden, a lion came out and leapt furiously at the king. Rāziya bravely and fearlessly hastened to the spot and with her Sabre inflicted masterly strokes on the lion which fell half-dead to the ground. [Heroic deeds of Muslim women, Sayyid Sulaymān Nadwī; Tabaqāt-i-Nasīrī, Tabaqāt-i-Akbarī]

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Fearless in the face of lions

Once, the King Jahāngīr went out on a hunting expedition with his wife Nūr Jahān. While hunting, Jahangir missed several shots which he fired while sitting on his elephant. However, Nūr Jahān, who was present, shot the lion dead, point-blank.

On another occasion, Nūr Jahān accompanied him once again on a hunting expedition. She was mounted on an elephant when all of a sudden, four lions appeared before her, but Nūr Jahān was not in the least perturbed. She fired her gun rapidly but calmly and shot dead two lions each with one bullet and the other two with two each. [Heroic deeds of Muslim women, Sayyid Sulaymān Nadwī; Tuzak-i-Jahāngīrī]

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An intelligent maid decrypts the code

Once, Māmūn Rashīd became disappointed with one of his associates, ‘Abdullāh b. Tāhir, and in a private meeting planned to assassinate him. Coincidentally, in this meeting, one of ‘Abdullah b. Tāhir’s close friend was present. He immediately wrote a secret letter to Abdullāh b. Tāhir.

The letter contained the following simple words.

‘بسم الله الرحمن الرّحيم ، يا موسى’

“I begin in the name of Allāh the most merciful most benevolent, O Mūsā!”

When ‘Abdullāh b. Tāhir received this message, he was deeply perturbed and could not understand the subject of the message. He was frantically turning the paper around trying to

decode the message. One of his slave girls standing nearby was watching this troubled state of her master. After a while, she remarked, “I have understood this message.” ‘Abdullāh asked, “And what is that?”

She explained that the writer of this message is referring to the verse of the Holy Qurān,

قَالَ يَٰمُوسَىٰٓ إِنَّ ٱلۡمَلَأَ يَأۡتَمِرُونَ بِكَ لِيَقۡتُلُوكَ فَٱخۡرُجۡ إِنِّي لَكَ مِنَ ٱلنَّٰصِحِينَ

“*O Mūsā, the chiefs are planning to kill you, so go away. I am your well-wisher*” (28:20)

‘Abdullāh b. Tāhir had just prepared to visit Māmūn Rashīd, however, he changed his mind and the intelligence of his slave girl saved his life. [Hayāt al-Haywān Vol 1]

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A woman silences the Caliph Māmūn

Caliph Māmūn Rashīd narrates that I was silenced by wit on three occasions. One was when I consoled a woman on the death of her son by explaining that she should regard me as her son instead. She replied, “Why should I not be sad when I have acquired a son like you?” [Humorous anecdotes; Nawādir al-Zahabiyyah; Tārīkh al-Islām li al-Zahabī]

A daughter's humorous remark

Imām A'mash RA emerged laughing from his home one day and asked his colleagues, "Do you know why I am laughing?"

"No" they answered.

He explained, "I was seated in my home and noticed my little daughter staring intently at my face. When I asked why she was looking at me so carefully, she replied, "I am amazed at my mother's choice of you as her husband!" [Humorous anecdotes; al-Nawādir wa al-latā'if; Nathr al-Duwar]

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A pious and wise mother and her sinful son

There was an old pious woman who used to fast excessively and perform Nafl Salāh in abundance. Unfortunately, she had a son who earned living by dealing in interest and was heavily involved in gambling and consuming liquor. By day, he would attend to his business and around evening time, he would return home and hand over the money

he had earned to his mother for safekeeping. His nights were spent in sin and vain pleasures.

One day, a thief decided to steal his money. The thief quietly followed the young boy to his house and entered the house without difficulty. He then concealed himself and waited. The young man handed the bag of money to his mother and left the house. She placed it in a particular room, wherein all their other valuables were also kept. The room was reinforced with solid timber walls and the door was made of iron. She then sat down in the same room and partook of her meal after the day's fast. The thief thought to himself that she would soon lock up the room and retire for the night and he could then emerge from his hiding place, open the door and take the bag of money. To his dismay, she remained where she was and began to perform Salāh. She prolonged the Salāh to such an extent that half the night passed. The thief was agitated and soon began fearing that she would continue her worship till daybreak. He quietly began searching the house and soon laid his hands upon a cloth and a string. He tied the cloth around his waist and lowered himself down a stepladder. He called out from the stepladder in a loud tone to frighten the old women. But she was wise and immediately realized he was a thief.

Giving the impression that she was afraid, she asked in a nervous voice, “Who are you?”

The thief answered, “I am Jibra’īl. I have been sent by the lord of the worlds to guide your son. I have been instructed to advise him so that he abandons his sinful ways.”

In an uneasy tone, the old woman requested, “Jibra’īl, I beg you to be kind to him as he is my only son.”

The thief replied, “I have not been sent to take his life.”

“But why have you been sent then?” she asked.

“I have been instructed to take away his bag of money so that he is grieved by the loss. After he repents, I will return his money.”

The old woman continued, “Fine, you may proceed with your order.”

He then requested, “Please step aside from that door.” She complied. He then entered the room and began gathering all the valuables. The old woman quietly shut the door and tied the lock while trapping him in the room. The thief realized that he was now in a predicament and desperately began searching for an opening to exit from the room, but there was none.

Frantically he cried out, “You may now open the door as your son has accepted my advice.”

The old woman replied, “Jibra’īl, what prevents you from exiting through the roof or flying over the walls with the aid of your wing? In this way, my eyesight will not be threatened.”

Now the thief realized that he was dealing with a wise old woman, he endeavored to soften her by apologizing and repenting, but she ignored him.

“You will have to remain in the room until morning,” she exclaimed and resumed her Salāh. He continued pleading until

sunrise when her son returned. She related to him what had happened. He summoned the police who promptly arrived and arrested him. [Humorous anecdotes; Al-Azkiyā]

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A woman with unparalleled patience

Abū Al-Hassān Sirāj RA says: “Once I set out to perform Hajj. I was making Tawāf of the Ka’bah when I happened to see a fair-faced woman. I said: “By Allāh! I have not seen such a beautiful woman, this beauty and brightness on her face is surely because she must have never suffered any grief or difficulty in her life.” She heard what I said and asked me, “What have you said? By Allāh! I am immersed in grief and my heart is afflicted with adversities and misfortunes and no one is there to share with me the pains of grief.” I asked: “What happened to you?”

She narrates: “Once my husband slaughtered a goat. My two small children were playing and my infant child was in my lap. When I went to cook the meat, one of these small children said to the other, ‘may I show you how our father slaughtered the goat.’ The other replied in the affirmative, and at once he killed his brother like a goat laying him on the ground. He then

ran away on account of fear and climbed up a mountain where a wolf devoured him.

My husband went out in search of the child and during the search, he died due to the intensity of thirst.

While I had gone out to look for my husband, I made the infant sit in the room. As I was near the door, the infant crawled to the fire upon which the earthen pot was lying. As soon as he disturbed it, it fell upon him in the boiling condition as a result of which his body was burnt removing the flesh from the bones.

I had a young daughter who was at her husband's house. When the information of this calamity reached her, she also collapsed and died.

It was I who was left alone. I asked her: "How did you endure all these misfortunes?" She said: "A person, who would ponder over 'patience' and 'impatience', would see much difference between them. The reward of 'patience' is noble, and for 'impatience' there is no reward.' Then, she recited some lines of poetry before walking away:

"I endured because endurance is the best thing to rely upon. If any advantage should be obtained by 'impatience' I must have adopted it. I endured many a misfortune that if these fell even on mountains, these would have broken into pieces. I exercised full control over my tears, and this stopped them to come out. Now, these tears are fulfilling within my heart."
[The spectacle of death, Khwāja Muhammad Islām]

An accused slave girl is cleared

‘Āyshah RA narrates: There was a black slave-girl belonging to an Arab tribe and they freed her but she remained with them. The slave-girl narrates, “Once, one of their girls (of that tribe) came out wearing a red leather scarf decorated with precious stones. It either fell off from her or she placed it somewhere. A kite passed by that place, saw it lying there and mistaking it for a piece of meat, flew away with it. Those people searched for it, but they did not find it. So, they accused me of stealing it and started searching me and even searched my private parts.”

The slave-girl further said, "By Allāh! While I was standing (in that state) with those people, the same kite passed by them and dropped the red scarf and it fell amongst them. I told them, “This is what you accused me of stealing and I was innocent and now here it is."

‘Āyshah RA added: “That slave-girl came to Allāh's Messenger and embraced Islām. She had a tent or a small room with a low roof in the mosque. Whenever she called on me, she talked with me and whenever she sat with me, she would recite the following: "The day of the scarf (band) was one of the wonders of our Lord. Verily, he rescued me from the disbelievers of the town."

‘Āyshah RA added: "Once I asked her, ‘What is the matter with you? Whenever you sit with me, you always recite these poetic verses.’ On that, she narrated to me the whole story.” [Sahīh Bukhārī Vol 1, Hadīth no 439]

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A yearning passion for knowledge

Hadhrat Āminah Ramliyyah RA was a pious saint of the second/third century. Since childhood, she was very bright and had a passion for studying and learning. When she grew old, she travelled to Makkah with her mother to perform Hajj.

During those days, a scholar would deliver his lessons in Masjid al-Harām. Hadhrat Āminah RA attended these lessons for some time and in due course acquired knowledge of the Qurān and Hadīth from this scholar. When this scholar passed away, she travelled to Madīnah and attended the lessons of Imām Mālik RA and memorized many Ahādīth by heart. After spending some time in the lectures of Imām Mālik RA, she returned to Makkah and attended the lessons of Imām Shāfi’ī RA, where she learnt the sciences of Fiqh.

When Imām Shāfi’ī RA went to Egypt, she went to Kūfā where there were many highly reputed scholars, and with ear-

nest passion and desire she sought knowledge from these scholars.

When she returned to her hometown, talk of her knowledge and status reached far and wide. Many great scholars would travel and come to acquire Ahādīth from her.

Once, she happened to visit Baghdād where she was noticed by a dervish saint and when his spiritual gazes fell upon her, it transformed her life completely.

She renounced the world, gave away all her wealth and committed herself to worship and remembering Allāh. In this state, she performed seven pilgrimages on foot. [Tārīkh Islām kī 400 Bākamāl khawātīn]

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A fortunate death

Hadhrat Nufaysah RA was an educated and saintly woman of the second century Hijri. She was known for her piety, exertion in worship and Karāmāt[1]. She lived in the same era as Imām Shāfi'ī RA. Being a great scholar himself, Imām Shāfi'ī RA would regularly visit her and dis-

[1] Supernatural wonders performed by saints

cuss various religious issues with her. Acknowledging her piety and her lofty status, Imām Shafi'ī RA instructed that after his death, his funeral should pass by the house of Hadhrat Nufaysah RA.

She passed away in one of the most fortunate ways. One day as she sat down to read the Qurān, she became extremely weak and all of a sudden her pulse started to slow down. The people around her insisted that she breaks her fast as she was fasting on that day, but she replied, "For thirty years, I have desired to meet my lord while I am fasting, and today when the opportunity has come, why should I break my fast?" After saying this, she passed away reading the verses of the Holy Qurān. [Tārīkh Islām kī Bākamāl 400 khawātīn: Mashāhīr Nisā, Ibn Khallikān]

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The Wife of Hadhrat Ibrāhīm AS

Ibrāhīm AS migrated with Hadhrat Sārah and entered a village where there was a tyrant king. The king was told that Ibrāhīm AS had come with a beautiful wife. The king forcefully summoned his wife, Hadhrat Sārah RA.

When the king approached her (with evil intentions), she got up and performed ablution, offered Salāh and said, "O Allāh! If I have believed in you and Your Messenger, and have

saved my private parts from everybody except my husband, then please do not let this disbeliever overpower me.” On hearing that, the king fell into a state of unconsciousness and started moving his legs (out of helplessness). On seeing the condition of the king, Sārah made Du’ā, “O Allāh! If he dies, the people will say that I have killed him.” The king regained his power and approached her again, but she got up again and performed ablution, offered Salāh and said, “O Allāh! I have believed in you and Your Messenger and have kept my private parts safe from all except my husband, then please do not let this disbeliever overpower me.” The king again fell into a state of unconsciousness and started moving his legs. On seeing that state of the king, Sārah AS made the Du’ā again, “O Allāh! If he dies, the people will say that I have killed him.” The king got either two or three attacks and after recovering from the last attack, he said, “By Allāh! You have sent a Satan to me. Take her to Ibrāhīm and give her Hājra.” So she came back to Ibrahim AS and said, 'Allāh humiliated the disbeliever and gave us a slave-girl for service.’ [Sahīh Bukhārī; al-Buyū’]

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An intelligent fifteen-year-old girl

An interesting dialogue between a modernist lady and an intelligent young girl.

Modernist: your father is keeping you imprisoned in the four walls of your house. Don't you feel that you are in jail?

Young girl: they keep criminals locked in jail while they keep diamonds and gold in a safe place. I am my father's diamond, which he keeps in the holy sanctuary (the home). Furthermore, jails are always locked and under guard while our home is open. The prisoner wants to free himself from prison. He is frustrated and full of grief in prison while I am at peace and rest inside our home. The thought of escaping does not rise in my mind. While prisoners love the idea of breaking out of prison to gain freedom; I love the safety and peace of my home. A fish is at rest inside water, not outside. [Pearls of wisdom part 2]

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The Pious Queen

Once, the king of Kābul entered his palace with an extremely gloomy and worried expression on his face. The Queen, who noticed this, enquired from him the cause of his sorrow. He replied, “I had been informed that an enemy has launched an attack upon Kābul and to repulse that attack, I dispatched our son with an army. I have just received the news that the prince’s army has been defeated and they are being chased by the enemy towards Kābul, I am worried about his defeat and shortly, I may lose my kingdom.”

The Queen replied, “The news you have received is false. The prince can't have been defeated.”

The king said, “This is official government news and can only be the truth.” The Queen again forcefully denied it.

Sometime later, the Queen noticed that the king appeared extremely happy and on enquiring the reason, he replied, “I received good news, Alhamdulillāh, the matter is just as you said it was. The prince has in fact defeated the enemy and expelled them from the kingdom. But tell me how were you so confident about our son’s victory?”

The Queen replied, “That is a secret.” Upon insistence from the king, she explained, “When our son was still in my womb, I made a vow that I would never eat a doubtful morsel of food.

I did not use a single penny from the government's treasury. I worked with my own hands and earned a living. When our child was born, before breastfeeding him, I used to perform Wudhū, offer two Rak'āts Nafl Salāh and make Du'ā to Allāh. He has been nourished by halāl; therefore, his character and attitude are noble. To turn back on the enemy is an act of cowardice. How could this child be so ignoble when right from the beginning his very blood was nourished by halāl sustenance? It is possible for him to be a martyr but never a coward." [Pearls of wisdom part 4]

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A woman's piety and acceptance of Du'ā

A man narrates that I saw a blacksmith who was handling metal from a burning furnace with his bare hands. On inquiry, the blacksmith narrated that in his neighborhood there lived a very handsome girl and he fell in love with her. However, because of her chastity and piety, she kept aloof.

After some time, they were struck by drought and there weren't many rations. Under these desperate conditions, she came to me pleading for some food, and I agreed on the condition that she would fulfill my demands. However, she said that she would not commit a sin and left.

The next day she returned, and the same conversation took place but she refused to commit a sin. On the third day, she entered my house, and I placed some food before her. She started crying and asked me, “Are you feeding me for Allāh’s sake?” I replied in the negative. She immediately got up and left, leaving the food untouched. On the fourth day, hunger had forced her to come again. At first, I denied it, but then she came into my house, and I placed the food in front of her.

On this occasion, Allāh had guided my heart and I thought to myself, despite being a woman, she is so particular about refraining from sin, and I myself am not able to save myself from sin. I immediately repented and said to the girl, “Eat without fear, I am feeding you only for Allāh’s sake.” The girl said, “If you are true in your words then may Allāh make the fire of this world and the hereafter forbidden upon you.”

The man narrates that the woman’s Du’ā was accepted to such an extent that now even the fire of this world does not harm me. [Nuzhat al-Majālis Vol 1]

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A father and daughter on a fishing expedition

Once, a father and daughter went out to catch some fish. Whenever the father would catch a fish, he would hand it over to his daughter. Without the father noticing, the daughter would place the fishes back in the water. When the father got up to leave, he asked to see the fishes he had caught. On seeing the basket empty he asked his daughter about the fishes. She said, 'I have heard a narration from you that a fish only gets trapped in the net when it stops remembering Allāh, and I do not wish to eat a fish that does not remember Allāh.' [Nuzhat ul-Majālis Vol 1]

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"The fire cannot burn our lovers"

A man had taken an oath from his wife that she would never give anything in charity. Coincidently, one day as she was giving something to a poor person her husband saw her and shouted, "How dare you go against my orders." She replied, "I did this for Allāh". The husband lit a

fire and said to the woman, “Ok then! Jump into the fire for Allāh.” The wife adorned herself with fresh clothes and jewelry. On seeing this, the husband remarked, “What is this?” She replied, “When a lover goes to meet their beloved, they go adorned”. Saying this, she jumped into the burning furnace. For three days the husband kept her locked in the burning fire. To his amazement, after the three days when the furnace was opened, his wife was sitting in the furnace smiling and the fire had no effect on her. Thereafter a sound from the unseen was heard: “The fire cannot burn our lovers” [Nuzhat al-Majālis Vol 1]

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A wife’s firm conviction in the words of the Holy Prophet ﷺ

A man asked his wife for a glass of water. By the time she brought the water, the husband had fallen asleep. She stayed by his bedside for the entire night, and in the morning when the husband realized this act of kindness, he was very impressed and said to her, “wish for something and I will fulfill your wish.” She shockingly replied, “I would like a Divorce. If you want to repay my favour then divorce me.” The husband was greatly saddened by this, and in the morning they both went to the Holy Prophet ﷺ.

On the way, the husband collided with something and injured his foot. Seeing this, the woman declared, “Enough! Let us return. There is no need for you to give me a divorce because you have narrated to me that the Prophet ﷺ has said, “Whenever Allāh wishes good for a person, then Allāh afflicts him with a calamity.” I have been living with you for many years, but I have never seen you fall ill or be afflicted by a calamity. This made me think that Allāh did not wish good for you and that is why I wanted a divorce from you. But now that I have seen you in this tragedy, I have come to know that Allāh wishes good for you.” [Nuzhat al-Majālis]

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An obedient and dutiful wife

There was a very pious lady, her father was a wealthy man, and after marriage, she moved to her in-laws. It so happened that one day her father became critically ill, and he wrote to her telling her to come and meet him. The daughter was living far away and coincidentally when she received the letter, her husband was out. She wrote back saying that her husband was not at home, and she could not come without his permission. When the father read the letter, he sent a second letter informing her that his health had deteriorated

severely and if she wished to meet him she must come immediately.

When the daughter read the letter, she sent a letter with the same reply, but before the letter could reach, her father had passed away.

A third letter was sent to her informing her of the death of her father. On receiving the letter, she recited, *"Innā lillāhi wa innā ilayhi rāji'ūn"* and prayed for him. After a few days when the husband returned home, he saw that she was very sad. When the husband asked what had happened, she informed him of her father's demise. The husband said, "You should have gone?" She replied, "You were not at home, and even though you would have given me permission, but our *Sharī'at* does not allow us to go out without the husband's permission."

After a few days, both the husband and wife travelled and visited her father's grave to pray for him. After some time, the daughter saw in a dream that her father is adorned in the adornments of Jannah. She asked him, "How did you gain this status?" The father replied, "Because of your piety Allāh forgave me. If you would have come to meet me without your husband's permission, I would not have received these blessings. You followed the *Sharī'at* and because of this, Allāh forgave my sins and had mercy on me." [Latāif e haqqānī]

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A woman happy with the rewards of the hereafter

Muslim b. Yasār RA narrates, “I once travelled to Bahrain and when I reached there, I was invited by a woman for lunch. This woman was wealthy and she had a few children and slaves, however, she seemed sad and worried. Before departing, I asked if there was anything I could do for her. She replied, “It is my wish that if you visit Bahrain again you should visit my house.”

Muslim b. Yasār says that after a few years, I happened to visit Bahrain again. Upon arrival at her home, to my surprise, I found an entirely different scene. There were no signs of wealth, and she had no children or slaves around, but she appeared to be happy and content. Upon enquiry, she explained, “After you left, all our goods of trade sunk in the sea, my children passed away and because of poverty the slaves ran away.” I said to her, may Allāh have mercy on you, but why do you seem happier than before. She replied, “Those days when I had wealth, I was worried lest it be the rewards of my deeds in this world, and I am deprived in the hereafter that is why I was always sad. But now that all these bounties have been taken away from me, I am certain that I will receive the rewards in the Hereafter, hence I am much more happy now” [Tanbīh al-Ghāfilīn]

Hadhrat ‘Āsiyah RA (wife of Fir’awn)

Hadhrat ‘Āsiyah RA was the wife of Fir’awn. You could imagine the courage that Hadhrat ‘Āsiyah RA had, from the fact that she was the wife of the notorious king, and she was well aware of his brutal and oppressive behavior. To deny him and go against him must have required immense courage.

Hadhrat ‘Āsiyah RA openly accepted the message of Hadhrat Mūsā AS and had no fear of the consequences. As a result of her denial and accepting the religion of Mūsā AS, she was mercilessly tortured under the blazing heat of the sun. When Fir’awn would finish torturing her, the angels would shade her with their wings. She would ask who has succeeded. When she was told that Mūsā and Hārūn AS prevailed, she would say, “I believe in the Lord of Mūsā and Hārūn.” Fir‘awn sent his aides to her and said to them, find the biggest stone. If she insists on keeping her faith, throw the stone on her, otherwise, she is my wife. When they came to her, she looked up to the sky and was able to see her house in paradise. She persisted in her faith and her soul was then captured. The stone was thrown on her lifeless body. [Tafsīr ibn kathīr, Sūra Tahrīm]

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Bibī Maymūnah RA

She is one of the unparalleled scholars and mystics of the fourth century. Her effectual speeches were known to soften the hardest of hearts. She had memorized the entire Qurān in her early years. On one occasion she said, the person who wears *halāl* clothes and thereafter abstains from sins in these clothes, these clothes don't rip and tear easily (they last a long time). The dress that I am wearing was made by my mother, I have been wearing it for forty-seven years and it is still intact. [Tarīkh Islām kī bākamāl 400 khawātīn; Khazīna al-Asfiyā]

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A Filipina lady and the power of prayer

A Filipina lady, Jamīlah Lama, talks of her experience with prayer. She says, "I had no meaning or aim in life. There was a question that kept following me and making me scared all the time: why was I alive? What would be the end of this farcical story? Everything around me was

telling me of foolishness and irrationality. I grew up in a catholic family that taught me the teachings of this religion with extreme strictness, and they hoped that I would be one of those who worked in the missionary field, propagating this religion at the global level, but deep down inside I was certain that this would never happen."

"I would wake up every day at dawn; something was telling me to pray so that I could escape from severe tension and depression that was affecting me at that time. That happened at sunset too. In fact, I began to pray in the Christian manner, which was the only way I knew, but my feeling of spiritual emptiness was still hounding me and dominating me despite my continual prayers."

"I was thirsting for something else, but I had no clear idea of what it was. Tears often fell from my eyes, and I prayed to God to give me light, insight and patience. My worry and anxiety increased, and I was filled with emptiness. Confusion dominated my life to an extent beyond my comprehension."

"One day, as my tension had increased, I felt a strong desire to look for a place to pray in which there were no images. I looked for this place for a long time until I finally found it: a small and beautiful mosque on the edge of our town. Among the green fields, amid the rice paddies. As soon as my feet crossed the threshold, my heart began to beat fast and I felt happy. I was certain that this place was the place that my heart had called me for a long time to look for."

"One of the Muslim women taught me how to do Wudhū and how to pray to Allāh. I joined the Muslims in prayer for the first time in my life. When I began to pray, I was overwhelmed with tranquility and peace of mind. This had never happened to me before in life. When I prostrated before Allāh with the worshippers, my spirit overflowed with boundless happiness. I felt that I would fly with joy after finding this prayer."

"This prayer is exactly what I was thirsting for. It has become my beloved friend and my constant companion by means which I get rid of all anxiety and suffering. I have bid farewell to depression forever and it no longer has any meaning in my life after Allāh, may he be glorified and exalted, guided me to Islām and honoured me with love of prayer. I can find no comment to make on this apart from saying: praise be to Allāh, the exalted, who guided me to this, and I could not have been guided had not Allāh guided me." [Islamic medicine, Yusuf al-hajj]

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A woman's Du'ā is instantly accepted

Abū 'Abdillāh b. Ja'far narrates: I saw a female Bedouin in a desolate place. Severe cold, storms and heavy rain had destroyed her fields. People had gathered

around her consoling her over the loss of her crops. She looked up to the skies and prayed: “O Lord! The destitute place their hopes in you, as you are the only one who takes care of them. Only you can recompense for what I have lost. So, deal with us as you can because we firmly believe that only you can arrange for our sustenance and all our hopes and expectations are with you.”

Abū ‘Abdillāh b. Ja’far says, I was still with that woman when a man came. We never knew who he was, where he came from, or for what purpose he had come with. When he saw the conviction of the lady, he took out five hundred Dinārs, gave them to the lady and left. The supplication of the lady was instantly accepted and Allāh provided for her from unexpected means. [Sunehrī kirneei; Majlat al-‘Arabiy, Nisā Zakiyyāt jiddan]

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A maid’s remark transforms the king

There was once a king who used to sleep on a cozy flower bed, and he had given his slave girl the responsibility to maintain it. One day, with an interest to experience the comfort of the bed, she said to herself, today I shall sleep on it and experience it for myself, and before the

king comes to know I will quickly get up and make it tidy again.

Coincidentally, as she was sleeping on the flower bed, the king entered and found her sleeping on his bed. Enraged, the king picked up his whip and started beating her. The maid started crying, but surprisingly, after a short while she started laughing. The king was surprised, He could understand why she was crying but he was perplexed when he saw her laughing. He asked her why she was laughing. She explained, “I slept on this flower bed for a little while and the consequence was that I was beaten. I laughed when I thought, how much will Allāh beat the one who slept on it his entire life?”

These words of advice hit the king’s heart. He left his kingdom and isolated himself in a jungle in the worship of Allāh and eventually died as a Walī, ‘friend of Allāh’. [Latāif e haqqānī]

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A lady and her hen

Shaybānī narrates: Once, ‘Abdullāh b. Ja’far RA arrived at the tent of a Bedouin lady. The lady had a hen which she had brought up and looked after with a lot of effort and affection. She slaughtered the hen, cooked it, and presented it to Hadhrat ‘Abdullāh b. Ja’far RA saying: “O Abū Ja’far! I brought up this hen with a lot of affection and effort; I would feed it special food, stroke its back in the night and I treat it like my own daughter. I had taken an oath that I would only bury this beloved hen in a blessed grave. I could not find a better and more blessed grave than your stomach, so I have slaughtered the hen and I wish to bury it in your stomach.” Hearing this ‘Abdullāh b. Ja’far laughed and ordered to give her five hundred Dirhams as a gift. [Sunehrī kirneei; ‘Iqd al-Farīd, Nisā Zakiyyāt]

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An actress' miraculous recovery

Laylā, a famous Moroccan actress was diagnosed with cancer. She visited many high-ranking professional doctors for treatment, but they were all helpless and she slowly began to lose hope in life.

Laylā narrates her own story: "The left artery of my heart, which supplied blood to my body, was infected with cancer. Being part of the film industry, I had no religion in my life and my faith in Allāh was almost non-existent. I hardly remembered Allāh; I was totally unaware of his existence, and I was far away from religion. I believed that beauty was eternal and it was meant to keep us fresh; youth is eternal and it gives us a chance to have fun in life. I had never imagined that one day I would be afflicted with a disease such as cancer.

When I was told that I had cancer, the fear and terror shook my life and I was out of my senses. I felt like running away, but where could I run away to? The disease was always with me. I felt like committing suicide but my love for my husband and children stood as an obstacle. I had everything: money, fame etc. I had all the means but at this critical moment, nothing helped me.

I travelled to Belgium for other treatment options. The doctors told my husband that they will have to amputate one of my limbs and I would have to take medicines that would have

dreadful side effects. The hair on my head, eyebrows and eyelashes would fall off; a beard will grow on my face; my teeth and nails will fall. Without a second thought, I rejected this prescription. I would prefer to die rather than tarnish my beauty and my natural physical appearance.

Dejected, I came back to Morocco and continued with minor treatments but there were no signs of cure. After spending six months in this miserable state, I realized that I had lost a considerable amount of weight, I had become pale, and I was constantly complaining of severe pain. When I visited a local doctor for a test, he advised me to go back to Belgium. I went back to Belgium with some hope, but when the doctors checked me, they told my husband the dreadful news that cancer had spread all over my body and as a result, my lungs have also been severely affected. They had never dealt with this kind of cancer and had no possible treatment to fight it. Thus, they advised my husband to take me back to my hometown where I could at least have a proper funeral as survival rates were equal to none.

This news fell on my husband like lightening, and he was shaken. However, instead of returning to Morocco, we got a ticket from Belgium to France with the hope that there may be some life-saving hopes there.

Unexpectedly, it struck my husband that we have visited all the doctors of the world and they were all helpless, but there is still one doctor left and we should go to him. When he spoke to me about it, it was as though I came back from a lost world.

He said, we should go Makkah Mukarramah, visit the house of Allāh and in the presence of Allāh, we should seek forgiveness and pray to him to cure you of this disease. The doors of heaven are always open, and he has the successful cure for all diseases.

In short, I set off to the holy land with my husband. On the way, we were constantly reciting, *'Lā ilāha illallah wallahu akbar'*. I was very excited as this was my first ever visit to the house of Allāh. I had purchased a small Qurān and would occasionally read it on the way.

At last, the moment came. We entered the courtyard of the Haram, the Ka'ba was in front of me and as soon as I saw the Ka'ba, I became extremely emotional, and tears came to my eyes. I started recalling my previous days of sin. I never used to pray or fast and now I was in the presence of the all-forgiving Lord and the one who loves his servants. I went close to the door of the Ka'ba and bitterly weeping I supplicated: "O my lord! All the doctors are helpless in curing me. O my lord! All illnesses come from you and cure is only in your hands. All the doctors have shut their doors for my treatment, but your door is always open. O Allāh I am at your door please do not close your door on me".

After this, I made Tawāf of the Ka'bah and during the Tawāf I prayed to Allāh to cure me.

I felt a change in myself, and I was spiritually quite high; I visited the 'Ulamā and scholars and requested books of Du'ās from them which I started to read. The 'Ulamā advised me to

read the Qurān as much as I can and drink plenty of Zam Zam water. They also advised me to do plenty of Zikr and send Durūd on the Prophet ﷺ.

I felt a sense of peace and tranquility in the Haram so I requested my husband if I could stay in the Haram. My husband agreed and I spent most of my time in the Haram, praying, supplicating to Allāh and very rarely would I go to my hotel.

There were a few women from Turkey and Syria who would sit beside me; they would always see me crying and making Du'ā. Once, they asked me the reason. I explained that firstly, I have been able make *tawāf* of the house of Allāh, and I had never imagined that I would be able to make *tawāf* and have this much of love for Allāh; secondly, I have been diagnosed with cancer so I am beseeching Allāh to cure me.

It was the habit of these women that after performing their prayer, they would come and sit next to me for a very long time. In due course, we formed a friendly relationship with each other. Once I asked the women if I could make intention for *I'tikāf*[1]? They said it was a very good idea, so we all made an intention for *I'tikāf*. We stayed in the Haram praying and making Du'ā. We used to sleep very little, and a small amount of food was sufficient for us, however, we used to drink plenty of Zamzam.

[1] Spiritual seclusion within the boundaries of a Masjid

When I arrived in Makkah, I was very thin and weak. The upper part of my body was swollen, and I had small and big red pimples all over my body which was a sign that the cancer had spread over the upper part of my body.

My friends would tell me to wash the upper part of my body with Zamzam. But I was hesitant to touch the swelling and the pimples. However, without touching my body I poured Zamzam over my body. The other ladies would tell me to wash my body with Zamzam, but I refused to do so. When they persisted, compellingly I started rubbing the Zamzam water on my body which was full of defective blood, pimples and swelling. Amazingly, within a few days all the pimples, the puss and blood disappeared. When my friends saw that the pimples and spots had vanished, they spontaneously shouted out, Allāhu akbar! Allāhu akbar!

Excited, I ran to my hotel to give my husband the good news. At first, he thought it was a fairy tale but then he started crying and remarked, “Have you already forgot that a few days before, the doctors had declared that you had only a few days to live.” I replied, “The time of life and death is in the hands of Allāh. Nobody knows the unseen besides Allāh”. After this we remained in Makkah for a week, then visited Madīnah Munawarah and then came back to France.

When the doctors in France witnessed that there were no signs of cancer and I was in a healthy physical state, they were astonished. I said to them that I ran away from your hospitals to the hospital of Allāh. And now I fear no one besides him.

The doctors then said: “Honorable lady, your case is an amazing one and it is surprising how all the symptoms have disappeared; however, it is still important that you have a check-up.”

The doctors examined me and took tests, but all the tests were clear. The doctors were shocked at this, such a disease that the world scientists have still not found a cure for was cured without any side effects.

After this, I deeply thanked Allāh. I would read the books of the life of the Prophet ﷺ and the Sahābah RA and whenever I would recall my previous life of sin I would cry bitterly and ask Allāh for forgiveness.” [Sunehrī kirneei]

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Maymūnah Sawdā

Hadhrat ‘Abdul Wāhid says that for three nights he asked Allāh Ta’ala to reveal to him who will be his companion in paradise. After three days it was revealed to him that his companion will be Maymūna Sawdā, an extremely dark-complexioned woman, hence the name Sawdā. After enquiring about her he found out that she was living with a certain tribe in Kūfah.

Abdul Wahid continues to narrate the following:
"On reaching Kūfah, I made inquiries about her whereabouts. I was informed that she was a shepherdess and could be found in a certain forest tending to the goats. When I reached there, I found her wrapped in a cloak engaged in Salāh. The goats were grazing while wolves were mingling with the flock without causing any harm to the goats. As I came closer, she shortened her Salāh. After finishing the Salāh she said: "'Abdul Wāhid! Not today. Go today. The promise of meeting is tomorrow (i.e. Qiyāmah)." I said: 'May Allāh have mercy on you. How did you know my name?' She said, "Don't you know that in eternity (*'Ālam e Arwāh*) all souls were gathered like an army. Those who had recognized one another there, recognize one another here. I asked her for some advice, and she said, "It is surprising that such a great lecturer like you asking others for advice. It has reached me from the pious ones that Allāh Ta'āla eliminates the love of communing with Him in solitude from a person who engrosses in the pursuit of such worldly bounties which Allāh Ta'āla has already bestowed to him. Instead of nearness to Allāh, he is distanced from Allāh Ta'āla. Instead of enjoying love with Allāh, terror is instilled in him.' Thereafter she recited five verses. The gist of which is as follows, "O Lecturer! You counsel and admonish others. You prevent others from transgressions while you, yourself are involved in such transgression. If you reform yourself and repent, your speech will penetrate their hearts. But being yourself trapped in sins, you doubt what you are saying to others."

I asked her to explain how the goats and wolves are living together harmoniously. She said: “Go and concern yourself with your work. I have made peace with my Master; thus, He has created peace between the goats and the wolves.” [Hayāt al-Haywān Vol 2]

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An old woman from the Banū Isrā’īl

Ibn Abī Hātim mentions in a narration that once, the Prophet ﷺ was hosted by a Bedouin, who honoured him and looked after him well. On leaving, the Prophet ﷺ told him to come and visit him if he was to ever to come to Madīnah. After a few days, the Bedouin came to Madinah and visited the Prophet ﷺ. The Prophet ﷺ said to him, “O Bedouin ask of me for your needs.” The Bedouin replied, “O Messenger of Allāh ﷺ, just a camel to ride and a goat that my family can milk.” Allāh’s Messenger ﷺ said to him, “Alas! Had you asked for something like the old woman of Banū Isrā’īl?” The Sahaba RA asked the Prophet ﷺ, “Who is the old woman of the Banū Isrā’īl ?” He ﷺ replied, When Kalīmullah (Hadhrat Mūsā AS) led Banū Isrā’īl out of Egypt, he got lost on his way and despite many efforts, he could not find the way. He gathered his people and asked them the reason for this gloomy state. The scholars of the Banū Isrā’īl replied that in his final mo-

ments, Prophet Yūsuf AS took a covenant from us that we were not to leave from Egypt unless we take his coffin with us. Hadhrat Mūsā AS then asked whether anyone knew where his grave was. They replied, 'No one knows where the grave is except an old woman.' Hadhrat Mūsā AS sent for her and asked her about the grave of Yusuf AS. The old woman said I will show you, but first I will take what is due to me. Sayyidina Mūsā AS asked her, "What do you want?" She said, I want to be your companion in Paradise. Hadhrat Mūsā AS found this request to be very burdensome, however, through revelation he was told to accept her demands. The old woman took Mūsā AS to a small lake and told him to draw out the water. When the water was drained out, the bare earth was exposed and then she said, "Dig here". As they dug, the grave became visible, and they took the coffin along with them. As they started walking, the gloominess disappeared, and they found their way. [Tafsīr ibn Kathīr Vol 3 Sūra Shu'arā]

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An Immoral woman turns modest through the Prophet's blessing

Hadhrat Abū Umāmah RA narrates that during the time of Rasūlullāh ﷺ there was an immoral woman who was flirtatious with men. She once passed by Rasūlullāh ﷺ when he was busy eating Tharīd. She shouted out, "Look at this man, sitting like a slave and eating like a slave!" Rasūlullāh ﷺ remarked, "Which slave can be more devoted in his servitude to Allāh than I?" She then said further, "He eats without giving me anything to eat." Rasūlullāh ﷺ said, "do eat." She said, "Feed me with your hand." When the Prophet ﷺ fed her, she further demanded, "Give me from what is in your mouth." When the prophet ﷺ complied and she ate the food, the woman was overcome with modesty, and she never flirted with a man for the rest of her life. [Hayāt al-Sahābah Vol 2]

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A slave woman intelligently frees herself

A slave woman once dropped some gravy on the clothing of Hadhrat Maymūn B. Mihrān Ra. When he became angry, the woman recited the following verse of the Quran, “Those who suppress their anger.” Hearing this he immediately abated his anger. Taking advantage of the situation, she recited the following part of the verse, “… and those who forgive people…” he then told her that she was forgiven. Fully exploiting the opportunity, she recited the concluding part of the verse, “…and Allāh loves those who do well.” Thereupon he said, “I free you for the pleasure of Allāh.” [Tanbīh al-Ghāfilīn P. 1]

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Hafsah Bint Sīrīn Ra

Hafsah bint Sīrīn Ra was the sister of the great luminary, Imām Muhammad ibn Sīrīn Ra. At the tender age of twelve, she held such proficiency in the field of Qira’ah that Hisham narrates that if Imām Muhammad Ibn

Sīrīn had any doubt in the matter of Qira'ah, he would refer to his sister, Sayyidatuna Hafsah.

At times Hafsah would light the lamp in the night and engage in worship. Sometimes, the lamp would get extinguished; however, her room would remain illuminated.

Mahdī B. Maymūn narrates that for thirty years Hafsah bint Sīrīn did not leave her worship chamber except for a need.

'Abd al-Karīm B. Mu'āwiyah says, I was told that Hafsah would recite half the Qurān every night, and besides the days of Tashrīq and the two days of 'Eīd she used to fast the entire year. [Sifatus Safwah Vol 2]

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Mother of 'Allāmah 'Ābidīn Shāmī RA

'Allāmah 'Ābidīn Shāmī RA was a great Faqīh and scholar. His mother was still alive when he died at the age of 56. She lived for two years after him and it is narrated that like other women she did not complain or weep over his death. As long as she lived, every week she would recite Sūra Ikhlas a hundred thousand times and send the reward to her son. [Jahan Dīdah]

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The repentance of prostitutes

There was once a drought in a place called Sandīlah. The residents became extremely worried. Salāt al-Istisqā was read daily, but there was still no sign of rain. After a few days, the prostitutes of the locality came to the chiefs of the area and said that all this trouble was a result of their evil actions. They requested permission to come out in the open field and repent without any men around, lest the wrath of Allāh descends instead of mercy.

Thus, arrangements were made, and all the women went into the jungle, fell into prostration and started weeping. They kept saying, “O Allāh! All this is due to our misfortune. We are sinful and immoral, but do not punish your creation because of us.” They prayed to Allāh how much they could. The narrator narrates that they had just raised their heads and immediately it started raining. [Latāife thānwī]

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A woman and her child

Anas ibn Mālik RA narrates, "A woman came to 'A'isha RA and 'Aysha RA gave her three dates. The woman gave each of her two children a date and kept one date for herself. The children ate the two dates and then looked at their mother. She took her date and split it into two and gave each child half of it. The Prophet ﷺ came and 'A'isha told him about it. He said, 'Are you surprised at that? Allāh will show her mercy because of her mercy towards her child.'" [Adab al-Mufrad Hadith no 89]

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Hasan Basrī and his slave girl

Once, Hadhrat Hasan Basrī Ra was visiting the market with his slave-girl. He instructed her saying: “stay put here and do not move until I come back.” Thereafter, he left to attend some work. When he came back, he did not find her at the spot. He found her at home. He asked, “My little girl, where did you disappear? She answered, “You left me in a place where Allāh’s name is not mentioned much!” [Educational encyclopedia of Islam, Syed Iqbāl Zahīr]

A pious Maid

‘Abdullāh b. Marzūq was one of the officers of the Caliph, al-Mahdī. He was once intoxicated and as a result, missed his Salah. One of his maid slaves came and placed a burning ember on his feet. He woke up terrified. The maid said to him, “When you can’t bear the fire of this world how will you be able to bear the fire of the hereafter?” [al-Mustatraf]

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Umm e Sharīk

Hadhrat ‘Abdullāh Ibn ‘Abbās RA mentions that Umme Sharīk RA was living in Makkah. In her heart, she had developed an appreciation of the greatness of Islam and thus accepted Islam. After accepting Islam, she would secretly meet the women of Quraysh and encourage them to accept Islam by inviting them to Islam, to the extent that it became apparent to the polytheists of Makkah that she had become a Muslim. As a result of this, the polytheists of Makkah caught her and said: ‘If it was not for your tribe, we

would have punished you severely, but now we will only be relieved once we return you to the Muslims.'

She narrates that the polytheists of Makkah seated me on a camel without a harness, and there was no cloth or saddle under me either. I was left in this condition for three days without any food or water. I spent three days in such a way that I did not hear the sound of anything that moves on the ground. Whenever the polytheists of Makkah would stop at any place, they would tie me up and put me in the sun whilst they would go and sit in the shade and would not give me anything to eat or drink. I would stay in that state even after they would have left.

In the meanwhile, they camped at a place and tied me in the heat of the sun whilst they walked away to the shade. All of a sudden, I felt the coolness of something on my chest. When I looked up, it was a bucket of water. I drank a little bit of water from it before it was removed and lifted back up. A little while later, the bucket came down again, so I drank from it until it was lifted again. It came down again in a similar manner, I drank a little from it and then it was lifted again. This happened several times. Finally, the bucket was handed over to me. I drank to my heart's content and poured the rest of the water on my body and clothes.

When they woke up and noticed the effect of water on me and saw my good condition, they said: 'Did you untie yourself and drink water from our water skins?' I said no and explained the entire incident.' They said: 'If what you say is true, then

your religion is better than our religion.' When they went to see their water skins, they noticed that they were exactly how they left them. They accepted Islam straight away. [Sifat al-Safwah; Hilyah al-Awliyā, Siyar a'lām al-Nubalā]

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Hadhrat 'Uzair AS's slave girl

In the Quran, Allāh mentions the story of Hadhrat 'Uzair AS. When Hadhrat 'Uzair AS passed by a locality that was in ruins, he wondered, "How will Allāh ever restore this place again?" As a result of this Allāh made him go to sleep for a hundred years.

Hadhrat 'Uzair AS had a slave girl who was very dear to him and at the time when he was put to sleep, she was only twenty years old. After a hundred years when Allāh woke him up, he sat on his donkey and headed straight to Bayt al-Maqdis. On reaching Bayt al-Maqdis he went straight to his locality, but no one recognized him, and he was unable to locate his house. Finally, after guessing his way through he came to the door of his house. At the door, there was an old blind woman hundred and twenty years of age. This was the same slave-girl which he had left hundred years ago. He asked her, "Is this 'Uzair's house?" After replying in the affirmative she started crying and remarked, "I have not heard anyone mention

his name for a long time." Hadhrat 'Uzair said, "I am 'Uzair." The old lady remarked, "Subhanallah! It has been a hundred years since he went missing and till today, I have not heard about him." Hadhrat 'Uzair said, "I am 'Uzair. Allāh has awakened me after putting me to sleep for a hundred years." The woman replied, "'Uzair was a man whose supplications were accepted. If he supplicated for an ill person, they would become well and if he was to supplicate for someone in difficulty their difficulty would be removed. So, if you are truly 'Uzair then supplicate for me so that I may regain my eyesight and recognize you." Hadhrat 'Uzair AS uttered a few words and passed his hands over her face. Through the command of Allāh, her eyesight was restored. When she saw him, spontaneously she exclaimed, "I bear witness that you are definitely 'Uzair." She went to the gathering of the Banū Isrā'īl and announced, "Uzair is back and Allāh has sent him to you once again." The Banū Isrā'īl did not believe her. She then said to them, "Look at me; I am that same blind and crippled woman. Through the Du'ā of 'Uzair I am standing in front you fit and healthy". [Hayāt al-Haywān Vol 1]

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The daughter of Fudhayl b. ‘Ayādh Ra

Fudhayl b. ‘Ayādh Ra had a young daughter who was suffering from some pain in her hands. One day, Fudhayl asked her, “How is your hand?” She replied, “It is Allāh’s grace. By Allāh! Even though he has put me through a little pain, he has kept the rest of my body at peace.” Hearing this, Fudhayl b. ‘Ayādh asked her to show him her hands. When she took her hand out, he kissed it. She then said to him, I ask you by Allāh, do you love me? Fudhayl replied, “Yes, by Allāh!” The young girl said, “May Allāh forgive you, I had never thought that you would love anyone besides Allāh.”

Hearing this, Fudhayl b. ‘Ayādh shrieked and sobbingly said, “My dear girl! You are reprimanding me for loving someone else besides Allāh. O Allāh by your honour I will never associate anyone one with you in your love.” [Hayāt al-Haywān Vol 1]

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Umm Sulaym bint Milhān

Umm Sulaym was the fortunate mother of Anas B. Mālik RA. After her husband's death, she was proposed by Abū Talha RA who had not yet accepted Islam. She said to him, "Do you not feel ashamed of worshipping a piece of wood that grows out of the earth, and then carved into an idol by an Abyssinian carpenter? If you accept Islam, it will suffice as my Dowry."

Later Abū Talha RA accepted Islam and married her. After some time, they had a child who became quite sick. One day, while Abū Talha RA had gone out, the child passed away. With great patience and wisdom, Umm Sulaym covered the child, placed him in a corner of the house and told her household not to inform Abū Talha of the incident. When Abū Talha RA returned in the evening she did not make him feel the least disturbed or grieved, and when he asked about the Child's health she replied, "He is in a much peaceful state." She thereafter prepared the night meal, adorned herself as if no tragedy had occurred and spent the night with Abū Talha.

She then asked Abū Talha, "If someone borrowed something from someone does he have the right to deny returning it when he is asked for it?" After replying in the negative Umm Sulaym said to him, "seek reward in your Child's death."

Grieved, Abū Talha RA proceeded straight to the Prophet ﷺ relating to him how he was treated by his wife. The Prophet ﷺ prayed for blessings in the night they had spent.

‘Ibāyah B. Rifāyah, the narrator mentions that I had seen seven of her children in the Masjid and they were all Huffāz of the Qurān. [Sifatus safwah Vol 1]

Imām Muslim RA mentions a narration that the Prophet ﷺ once saw a dream regarding which he said, “When I entered paradise, I heard the sound of footsteps in front of me. I noticed that it was Ghumaysa bint Milhān, the mother of Anas ibn Mālik RA.”

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Khwāja Nizāmuddīn Awliyā Ra’s mother

Khwāja Nizāmuddīn Awliyā Ra says: Once, after sighting the new moon I came to pay my respects to my mother as it was my habit. She asked me, “To whom would you pay your respects next month?” Hearing these words from her I sensed that her death was near. Dejected, I asked, “Mother! To whom do you entrust a weak and feeble person like me” she replied, “I will answer your question tomorrow.”

I wondered why she did not answer me at that moment. She told me to spend the night with Sheikh Najīb al-Dīn. As per her instructions, I went away. Just before dawn the next day a maidservant came running and informed me that my mother wanted me at once. I got frightened and enquired if everything was ok. She replied in the affirmative. When I came to my mother she said to me, “Yesterday you had asked me something, and I promised to give you an answer today. Now listen carefully.” Holding my right hand she said, “O Lord, I entrust him to your care.” Saying this, her soul departed, and I thanked Allāh for I was more pleased with the answer she gave than if she was to leave the house filled with gold and precious pearls. [Tarīkh Da’wat o Azīmat Vol 3]

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An obedient woman

Umar ibn al-Khattāb passed by a leprous woman doing tawāf of the Ka’bah and said to her, "Slave of Allāh, do not make people uneasy. Better that you stay in your house," so she did so. Someone passed by her after the demise of Hadhrat ‘Umar RA and said to her, "The one who forbade you has died, so come out," she replied, "I am not going to obey him when he is alive and disobey him when he is dead." [Muwatta Imām Mālik]

Fasting in Rajab

There was a devout woman in Basrah. When her death drew near, she instructed her son to shroud her in the clothes she wore while worshipping during the month of Rajab. However, when she died her son forgot her request and shrouded her in a different shroud. When he returned home, he saw that the shroud she was buried in was there, but the clothes she wore in Rajab were missing. A voice came from the unseen, “take your shroud; we have shrouded her in her own clothes. Whoever keeps the fasts of Rajab we do not keep them sad in their graves.” [Nuzhah al-majālis Vol 1]

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Prepared for death

Abū ‘Alī al-Misrī narrates: I had an elderly neighbour who used to bathe the dead. One day I asked him to narrate something amazing that he has witnessed. He narrated the following incident: “Once, a handsome young man, dressed smartly came to me and asked if I could bathe one of their deceased. I said yes and then followed him until we reached a house where he made me wait outside. After a

short while, a handsome young girl, resembling the young man came out wiping her eyes. She asked me, “Are you the bather?” I said, “Yes.” She told me to enter saying, “In the name of Allāh. *Lā Hawla wa lā Quwwata illā billāh*.” When I entered the house, I saw the young man who came to me. He was lying on a bed and he was in the throes of death, his soul was up to his throat and his eyes were wide open. He had placed his shroud and the *Hanūt*[1] by his head. Before I could even sit by him, he breathed his last. I remarked, “*Subhānallāh*! This man is a saint; he recognized his time of death.” I bathed him while my hands were trembling. After I finished bathing the young boy, the young girl came to me. She was his sister; she kissed him on his forehead and said, “I will shortly meet up with you.” As I got up to leave, she thanked me and said, “Ask your wife if she can also do what you do very well i.e. bathing the dead.” I was shaken by her words as I realized she would meet the same fate as the young boy.

After burying the young man, I came to my wife and narrated the entire incident to her. Later, I brought her with me to the house of the young girl. I stood outside her door and sought permission to enter. She said, “in the name of Allāh let your wife enter.” When my wife entered, she saw the young girl, she had her face towards the Qiblah and she had breathed her last. My wife bathed her and thereafter buried her by her brother. May Allāh have mercy on them both. [al-Mustatraf]

[1] A scent used when bathing a deceased

The reward of charity is multiplied by ten

One of the judges of Basrah had a very pious daughter who had heard about the virtues of charity. It so happened that one day a beggar came at her door. She called her slave-girl and told her to give the beggar a pearl that was within the braids of her hair. In fear of her father, she hastily cut her braids and gave them to the beggar. The beggar took the pearl out and threw the braid of hair away. The girl's father, the judge of Basrah was informed that his daughter had committed an insolent act and cut her braids. The father summoned her and enquired her about the complaint. She remarked, "God forbid that such should happen!" The father said, "Ok, let me see your hair". She said, "First let me read two rak'āts." She prayed two rak'āts and in prostration, she cried to Allāh, "O Allāh, I have hope in you and I gave in charity only for your sake. My faith only lies with you. Do not disgrace me in front of my father". She had just raised her head from prostration, and she had ten braids of hair and in every braid, there was a pearl. [Nuzahatul Majālis, Vol 1]

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Hamida Begum: A brave woman

In Jahangir's reign, the fortress of Daulatabad was under Nizam al-Mulk. Hamid Khan, a Negro was the court consul of Nizam al-Mulk, and inside the palace, Hamid Khan's wife Hamida Begum had assumed the supreme say. She was an ordinary woman, but she gradually gained power even in Nizam al-Mulk's court. When she rode out, the nobles and military commanders walked beside her horse on foot. Nizam al-Mulk was a tool in the hands of this couple. During this time 'Adil Khan sent a huge army against Nizam al-Mulk who had no worthy man to send in opposition. Hamida Begum offered her services saying that if she did win, it would be glory for her, and if she were vanquished, it would be a matter of little or no consideration for a woman. Nizam al-Mulk consented, and Hamida Begum marched with the forces. She pleased the soldiers with her generosity and when the fighting armies clashed, she stood like an adamantine rock in the battlefield. Thus, inspired by her presence, the soldiers fought gallantly and not long after 'Adil Khan's troops fled in confusion and disorder, leaving behind their artillery.

Mirza Hadi Writes:

She put on her veil over her pretty form and fastened ornamented sword and dagger around her waist. And when the two forces arrayed in opposition, she gave a bold, gallant, and cou-

rageous fight to Adil Khan's forces and encouraged her forces to kill, fight and strike boldly, and promised bounties for them. She herself stood manfully like an impenetrable mountain during the fight and completely discomfited the assailants. [Heroic deeds of Muslim women]

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A statement full of courage

The story of Islamic Spain is one of the highlights of Islamic history. When the last Sultan of Granada, Abu 'Abdullah handed over the keys of his fortress to the Christian conqueror, he looked upon the country that the Muslims had ruled for six hundred years. Tears overflowed his eyes. The Sultan's mother who stood beside him reproached him:

"You may well weep like a woman for what you could not defend like a man." [Heroic deeds of Muslim women]

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The Madrassah Sawlatiyyah

Maulana Rahmatullah Kiranwi RA was one of the great Indian freedom fighters. Due to circumstances, he had to migrate from Hind to Hijaz where he decided to establish a Madrassah. However, he could not find the means to go ahead with his plans. Coincidentally, during that time, a very pious and illustrious lady from the family of Tipu Sultan, Sawlatun Nisa had come from Calcutta to perform Hajj. When the proposed plan of the Madrassah was presented before her, she strongly supported the blessed cause and donated a staggering thirty thousand rupees for the Madrassah. In today's days this would be equal to the hundred thousand.

Even today this Masdrassah exists in Saudi Arabia, and hundreds and thousands of students have graduated from this Madrassah. This Madrassah was named after her and it is known as, 'Madrassah Sawlatiyyah'. [Mithaali Khawateen]

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Zayb al-Nisā the daughter of an emperor

Zayb al-Nisā was a famed poetess and the daughter of the emperor Aurangzeb. Aurangzeb ‘Ālamgīr gifted Maryam al-Kashmiriyyah 30,000 gold Dinars after his daughter Zayb al-Nisā memorized the Qur’an under her supervision. As well as memorizing the Quran, she also learnt writing and the different styles of calligraphy; she studied Hadith and Fiqh according to the prevalent syllabus. She possessed a huge library with many rare and amazing books. There was no woman in that time that could compare with her in her talent, genius, clarity of thought and gentle nature. She never married. She was the author of many books. By her request, Shaykh Safī al-Dīn Ardabilī translated ‘al-Tafsīr al-Kabīr’ of ‘Allāmah Fakhr al-Dīn Rāzī into the Persian language and named it ‘Zayb al-Tafāsīr’ after her name. [Who are the Women of the Quran, Ml ‘Imrān Kājī]

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‘Āysha bint ‘Imrān Manūbī

After completing the memorization of the Quran under her father, she fully engrossed herself in worship and cut herself off from all worldly pleasures. She had completed one thousand five hundred and twenty completions of the Qur’an in her life. She loved to spend on the poor and help those who were in difficulty. She never kept any of her expenses back for her own needs. She used to say, “If one coin remains in my pocket till the night which I had not yet given in Sadaqah, my entire night’s worship will be incomplete.” She passed away in 665 A.H. while reciting the verse, ‘Verily, Allah is with those who adopt Taqwa and those who continuously do good’. [Who are the Women of the Quran, Ml ‘Imrān Kājī]

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Umm al-Sa'd a proficient Qari

Ummu al-Sa’d was born in north Cairo. At the tender age of one, she lost her eyesight. She became a Hafizah in Alexandria at the age of fifteen. At the age of twenty-three, she completed memorizing the ten modes of Quran recitation under a great woman scholar, Shaykhah

Nafeesah. After completing her memorization of the Qur’an, she went to Shaykhah Nafīsah and requested to study the ten Qira’aat (recitations). Nafīsah agreed on the condition that Ummu Sa'd would not marry. Shaykhah Nafīsah would refuse to teach girls because after marrying they would become busy and then neglect the Qur’an. Ummu Sa’d went on to become the most knowledgeable in the science of Qirā’ah. Being the only woman to specialize in the ten Qirā’ah, she had spent over fifty years granting ijāzah (license to read) in the ten Qirā’ah. She herself would say, "It is from the blessing of Allah that anyone in Alexandria who has obtained an ijāzah (license) in the Qur’an, in any type of Qirā'ah, has either received it directly from me or from someone who I have given Ijāzah to." Ummu Sa'd once commented: "Sixty years of memorizing the Qur’an and its recitations has made me unable to forget any of it. I can recall every verse, its chapter and its Juz,’ I know the verses that are similar (Mutashābih) and how to recite the same verse in different Qirā’ah. I feel like I know the Qur’an like my name, I cannot imagine forgetting a letter of it or making a mistake in it. I do not know anything other than the Qur’an and its recitations. I never learned science, listened to a lecture, or memorized anything other than the Qur’an and the texts that were related to the Qur’an and Tajweed. I don't know anything other than that." [Who are the Women of the Quran, ‘Imrān Kājī]

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Sustenance from the unseen

Hadhrat ‘Uthmān b. Qāsim narrates that when Umm Ayman migrated to Madinah, she reached a place called Munsarif by the evening, which was just before Rawhā. She had been fasting that day and was extremely thirsty but had no water. When the thirst became unbearable, a bucket of water suspended from a white rope was lowered on to her from the sky. She took hold of it and drank to her fill. Thereafter, she would always say, “I never felt thirsty after that incident. In fact, I would even go out during midday on extremely hot days while fasting, but would never get thirsty after that drink. Fasting during very hot days therefore never made me thirsty.” [Hayat al-Sahaba; Ibn Sa’d]

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Laughing in pain

It has been reported that the wife of Hadhrat Fath al-Mosulī Ra accidentally fell and as a result cut her fingernails. Remarkably, she started laughing. Somebody asked her, “Do you not feel any pain?” she replied, “The lust of reward removed the bitterness of the pain from my heart.” [Qisas al-Awliya abridged Nuzhah al-Basateen]

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Awareness of Allah

A leading man in Basrah went into his garden. By chance, his eye fell upon the beautiful wife of his gardener. He sent the gardener away on an errand, and said to the woman,

“shut the gates.” She replied, “I have shut them all except one, which I cannot shut. He asked, “which one is that?” She said, “the gate that is between us and Allah.” On receiving this answer, the man repented and begged to be forgiven.” [Kashf al-Mahjub- English translation Prof. Renold A. Nicholson]

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A mother's legacy

One of the governors of Egypt sent for Ibn al-Furāt and said to him, "I have been harbouring evil intentions regarding you for a long time now. I would have loved to arrest you and confiscate all your possessions, but I have seen you in my dreams on numerous occasions, resisting and opposing me by means of a loaf of bread. I always see you escaping from my clutches. I then command my soldiers to apprehend you, but when they shoot arrows at you, you defend yourself by means of the loaf of bread in your hand. It appears that I will never be able to harm you. Please tell me what the story behind this loaf of bread is."

Ibn al-Furāt replied, "O governor, since I was a child, every night, my mother would place a loaf of bread beneath my pillow, and the next morning, she would give it away in Sadaqah on my behalf. This remained her practice until her demise. I have continued with this practice ever since. Every night, I place a loaf of bread beneath my pillow and give it out in Sadaqah the next morning."

The governor was taken aback and replied, "I will never attempt to harm you from now onwards. In fact, I now entertain good thoughts about you and have developed true love for you." [Pearls from the path; al-Bidayah wa al-Nihayah]

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A pious mother

Sheikh Muhammad al-‘Arīfī writes, “Nayf is one of my friends. He had a very pious mother. She never used to like having pictures around in the house, because the angels do not enter a house in which there is a dog or a picture. She had a young daughter who used to have all sorts of toys, except a doll. Her mother used to forbid her from buying dolls but allow her to buy anything else. Her maternal aunt once gave her a doll and said, “play with it in your room but don’t let your mother see it!” After a couple of days, the mother found out, so she decided to give advice in an appropriate manner. When they sat at the dinner table, Umm Nayf said, “dear children, for a couple of days I feel that there have been no Angels in the house! I have no idea why they left! There is neither might nor power except with Allah” The young girl listened silently. After dinner, the young girl returned to her room to notice the doll amongst her toys. She picked up the doll and brought it to her mother and said, “Mum! This is what caused the angels to leave. You may do with it as you please.”” [Enjoy your life, al-‘Arifi]

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Romanus and his wife

During the conquest of Syria, when Busra was conquered, Hadhrat Khālid RA appointed some men to help gather the belongings of Romanus, the governor of Busra. Upon reaching his home, they found him arguing with his wife who was demanding a divorce. He said, "What do you want?" She replied, "The leader of your army will make the decision." So, they took her to Khālid RA to whom she started complaining. A Roman who knew Arabic translated for them and said that she was laying a complaint against Romanus. When Khālid RA asked the cause, she replied, "I dreamt last night that an extremely handsome man whose face shone like the full moon came and said, 'The 'Arabs will conquer this and all of Syria and 'Iraq.' I said, 'Who are you?' He replied, 'Muhammad Rasulullah.' He then offered me Islam which I accepted and then taught me two chapters of the Quran." Everyone was amazed and Hadhrat Khālid RA told the translator that she must recite those chapters. So, she recited Surahs *al-Fātihah* and *al-Ikhlās* and renewed her declaration of Islam to Hadhrat Khālid RA. She said to Romanus, "Become Muslim or divorce me." Hadhrat Khālid RA laughed and said, "Pure is He Who guided her." Then he said to the translator, "Tell her that her husbad embraced Islam before her." This gladdened her. [Conquest of Syria, al-Waqidi]

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INDEED, ESPECIALLY IN TIMES OF CONFUSION AND DIFFICULTIES, WE FIND TRUE INSPIRATION, INCENTIVE, AND MOTIVATION TO BETTER OURSELVES IN THE ANECDOTES AND STORIES OF GREAT LUMINARIES OF THE PAST, THE BEACONS OF TRUE GUIDANCE. THE COMPILER HAS INCLUDED STORIES AND EXAMPLES OF PIOUS, GENEROUS, AND COURAGEOUS WOMEN THROUGHOUT DIFFERENT CENTURIES: THE SELECTION OF THESE ANECDOTES TRULY BRINGS FORTH A DEEP LOVE AND APPRECIATION OF THIS CARAVAN AND CHAIN OF PIOUS WOMEN TO GRACE THE EARTH. THE COMPILER DOES NOT ONLY PROVIDE EXAMPLES FROM THE WIVES OF THE PROPHET ﷺ, THE FEMALE-COMPANIONS AND WOMEN BEFORE ISLAM, BUT OF DIFFERENT GENERATIONS INCLUDING UP TO RECENT TIMES, NAMELY, THE MOTHERS OF MAULANA ILYAS KANDHLAWI AND MAULANA UMAR PALANPURI (MAY ALLAH HAVE MERCY UPON THEM).THESE STORIES ENTAIL A VARIETY OF MORALS AND PRACTICAL LESSONS, HELPFUL IN RESPONDING TO THE DIFFERENT CHALLENGES OF LIFE. THEY HELP TO DEVELOP PATIENCE, RESILIENCE, OPTIMISM AND "STRENGTHEN YOUR HEART UPON THE TRUTH". [HUD: 120] - MUFTI HANIF PATEL (ASKOURIMAM.COM)